

President's Annual Report to the Matamata Soaring Centre Inc

for year to 31 March 2022.

Considering the objects of the society, I report for the last year:

Airfields and Facilities

A significant development this year has been the MPDC no longer offering renewal of long-term leases, instead imposing a month-by-month agreement on existing leaseholders. This is in strong contrast to the previous 5-year renewal terms. Council's advice of this has been rather blunt, for example (addressed to an existing leaseholder, not the MSC):

“Council's offer to renew your lease on (date redacted) has been withdrawn

Your lease is due to expire but Council will continue to lease on a month-by-month basis under the terms and condition of the expired lease.

This mandate applies to all the aerodrome leases.

Council cannot guarantee that your lease will be renewed until a review of the Resource Management Plan (currently pending) has been discussed and debated, and all affected parties are consulted on concepts. Council currently does not have a timeline for this consultation process but will indicate any updates at www.mpdc.govt.nz”

Note that the MSC leases for the clubhouse and bunkroom expire 2024, so there remains some time for us under the existing contract.

Unsurprisingly, this mandate has caused considerable anxiety amongst owners of hangars on the reserve. To date, we have no knowledge of the reason for this change. Further, the Reserve Management Plan renewal “does not have a timeline”.

We surmise that the background is the request from our neighbours Ngāti Hauā, through the Co-Governance Committee (“Committee”) for allocation of some of the reserve along the Eastern boundary to provide parking for the Marae and proposed Health Centre. Note the Committee is established by the Ngāti Hauā Treaty Settlement (S 5.30 through 5.36) and (S 5.34(2)) is to:

“(b) make recommendations to the Council in relation to the administration of the Waharoa Aerodrome land and the Council's Waharoa Aerodrome land; and

(c) make final decisions on access and parking arrangements for the Waharoa Aerodrome land and the Council's Waharoa Aerodrome land that affect Raungaiti Marae; ...”

There are plans (see for example the MPDC Agenda for the Waharoa (Matamata) Aerodrome Committee, 24 March 2022) initiated in 2015 for changes to “access and parking” arrangements, and discussion is ongoing in the committee. Note that “No timeframes have been discussed by the committee”. It is appropriate that we work to understand the concerns of affected parties and think about ways we might contribute to a solution.

It's worth noting that Ngāti Hauā have stated clearly (Co-Governance Committee Meeting 24 March 2022, following a submission from Rae Kerr) that they understand grievances (see Ngāti Hauā Deed of Settlement S 2.138 through 2.148), and have no wish to create new grievances amongst leaseholders. I am confident we can attain a mutually acceptable outcome once we are informed about the proposals.

A further (ongoing) issue is the shortage of land for new hangars. We expect this will be addressed in the updated Reserve Management Plan.

Given the absence of a timeline, and the uncertainty faced by leaseholders, I propose that the MSC engage actively with the Airfield User Group in preparing a "wish list" representing an acceptable consensus. While I acknowledge that the User Group has no standing to influence governance of the airfield (refer Memorandum of Understanding with Council, Reserve Management Plan Appendix 4), I'm of the opinion that a single submission to the Reserve Management Plan on behalf of the whole User Group would be favourably received by Council when the Reserve Management Plan opens for submissions.

This aligns with our recognition at last year's AGM that the MSC was created as a "political" body to represent the regional gliding clubs, and an extension of that thinking to include other airfield users, thus adding to the "number of votes" represented by a submission.

An ongoing issue is the use of 04/22 for grass harvesting under contract to the council. Recently I was in the back seat of a Duo-Discus that aborted takeoff for the ridge due to loss of directional control on 28 due to crosswind exceeding "demonstrated crosswind component 11 knots"; I have witnessed numerous other incidents both on takeoff and landing due to the crosswind component, noting that "ideal" wind direction for ridge flying on the Kaimai Ridge is about 230, compared to runway heading 280, so a 50 degree difference, whereas runway 22 is only 10 degrees different from 230. I suggest it is appropriate that MSC go on record as advising MPDC of the risks associated with unavailability of runway 22, bearing in mind their response might be we could mitigate the risk by not flying on good ridge days. What say you?

Thanks to Dave Dennison for attending the both the co-governance committee and airfield users' group meetings and representing us through the year.

[Flying meetings, camps, instructional courses...contests etc.](#)

Cross-Country Course

This year, our cross-country course was cancelled due Covid restrictions. I'd like to report that over the season I've had several conversations with participants in earlier XC Courses, who expressed the breakthrough in cross-country flying that the course delivered them. Very gratifying, and it confirms that the course structure is delivering the results we intend.

YouthGlide Camp

In early December a YouthGlide Mini-Camp was held, with support from Feilding and Taranaki Clubs as well as the "usual suspects" Piako, Tauranga, Aviation Sports and Auckland. I acknowledge the support of these clubs in providing us gliders and instructors for the event. The westerly wind co-

operated and provided an opportunity for initial ridge training as well as “free” lift for training exercises. Again, this confirms the merits of the Matamata airfield as a premier soaring site.

Multi-Class National Contest

Wow! This time we attracted 40 entries in three classes. Of note were the 5 entries in the Sports Class, with a good fight for the podium. 7 thermal flying days of a possible 10. Once again, Matamata showed up as a great place to stage gliding competitions.

Sailplane Grand Prix

Our third “Grand Prix” competition was held over 6 days in March (first two scheduled days lost due weather, then 6 days straight!). Entries were split into two classes based on handicap, both classes flying the same task with different start times, and this resulted in some excellent close competition. Interesting feature this year was the number of disqualifications for rule breaches, perhaps suggesting an opportunity for some coaching/training to prepare entrants for future events? Once again, Dave Dennison stepped up to calculate the handicap-based circle sizes for each task, with Bob Gray and Tim Bromhead as Task Setters. I’m happy to express our thanks to these guys for their contribution to a successful event.

It is worth noting that numbers of entries increased compared to earlier events, so likely Grand Prix flying will be a part of our future (unless this was merely a Covid-induced blip? I think not, rather we’ve attracted more interested pilots particularly from amongst the Club Class fraternity).

ATC National Camp

This event was re-scheduled from December to last month, due Covid restrictions. Once again, Norm Duke acted as Course CFI and facilitated the progress of ATC Cadets with the “To Solo” syllabus. In April, 6 Cadets achieved first solo: more detailed report next year.

Volunteers

It is appropriate that I acknowledge the volunteers who make our events possible. I’m continually delighted with the people and member clubs who step forward to support our events, whether by loans of equipment or provision of services. We’re a team, and the volunteers who support our flying are very much appreciated. From all the pilots and member clubs, Thank You!

Facilities and services for refreshment, convenience, and accommodation

I’d like to thank Iggy Wood for his work as our maintenance man, leading to a list of upcoming maintenance tasks, which he then proceeds to handle. Thanks, Iggy!

One of the plans is to build storage for MSC stuff related to the kitchen, separate from the space used by the Piako Club. This will reduce the need for the PGC members to relocate “our” stuff when preparing the clubhouse for the annual “Walsh” occupation.

Marion and I are working towards a kitchen improvement plan, likely minor changes within the existing space rather than a rebuild with shifting walls and doorways.

A separate project has been a review of the bedding and mattresses in the bunkhouse, where we've disposed of some stuff in poor condition, and sourced mattress covers, and duvet covers in good condition from various Op Shops. Every bunkroom now has a full complement of bedding of agreeable quality. Thanks, Marion, for finding this stuff and adjusting for size as required.

Acquire by purchase, lease...in or over any lands

Nothing to report on this one.

Acquire by purchase...aircraft, furniture and spare parts.

This year MSC purchased a 2% share in the Tauranga Gliding Club's "little" Pawnee, ZK-PNE, for the sum of \$1,000. Our agreement assists in making the aircraft available for contests and for MSC member clubs needing a temporary tug, while complying with NZCAR Part 91.

To sell, hire out...any of the property or assets

Hire of our bunkrooms, during contests, "The Walsh", ATC National Camp and other courses forms a significant contribution to our income. Sadly, Covid restrictions have seriously impacted our income from Walsh and ATC, and we are fortunate to have had the events we did. Interruptions and pandemics are beyond our control, we simply must manage our income and expenditure in a responsible fashion. There will be debate around this topic at the AGM.

Further objects

The objects for which we were established proceed to further topics, essentially concerning trusts, borrowing and investments, and there is nothing to report thereon for the year.

David Moody
President
May 2022