

SPECIAL MAAA MEMBER UPDATE - CASA SENATE ENQUIRY OUTCOME

Re: Proposed new remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) registration and RPAS operator accreditation scheme (PP1816US).

As many of our members will be aware, the public spotlight is once again on model aircraft flying. As part of the outcomes of the Senate Enquiry for the registration and accreditation of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA's) and pilots, CASA released the new proposed changes for public consultation on Friday 25th January 2019.

Working with CASA on an exemption for members at MAAA fields

In November, the MAAA was invited to sit on the CASA Technical Working Group (TWG) to review the objectives of RPA operations together with many commercial operators. Following the meeting of the TWG, CASA published a discussion paper. In response, the MAAA Executive prepared a very comprehensive reply to all 177 items to ensure (as a first step) exclusion of MAAA Fields. The MAAA Executive are pleased that the extensive work completed to date has resulted in the Public Consultation document including an exemption for Members at MAAA Fields - an exemption we will strive to ensure remains.

The impeccable safety record of members over the past 40 years

The MAAA Executive believe that regardless of any online registration/accreditation system, put in place to educate the general population, it will not equal the MAAA standards or increase safety outcomes already achieved by MAAA Members. Through our training schemes, club management and safety culture, MAAA Members possess a greater knowledge on appropriate safe operational requirements of model aircraft flying than non-affiliated members.

At this stage of the community consultation process the initial and primary MAAA focus, "protection of MAAA fields and operations" is almost a certainty - we now need to continue to convey the historical performance, proficiency and awareness of all MAAA members and have the exemption of registration by MAAA members to be applicable to any location we fly in accordance with MOPs, Administrative Instruments and legislation.

The MAAA are lobbying for your rights

Many operators within the RPAS space are unaware of the role the MAAA and clubs play in the safe administration of model aviation and any submissions made by MAAA or its members must be done in a considered and evenly balanced way. Emotional representations within the community consultation

phase of the process will only cause harm to the lobbying into which the MAAA Executive has already invested significant time and effort.

Specific points the MAAA Executive have lobbied:

The MAAA is a responsible organisation and has been such for in excess of 40 years.

The MAAA is recognised by CASA as a safety conscious organisation and has been appointed a RAAO (Recognised Aviation Administrative Organisation).

The MAAA State Associations and Clubs have in place rules and policies promoting the safe flying of model aircraft and structured training schemes.

The MAAA Instructor and wings system promotes the safe flying of model aircraft and knowledge of rules and regulations.

Members' knowledge of aviation rules and regulations far surpasses those of the general flying hobbyist population.

The impeccable safety record of members over the past 40 years.

Through the administrative and safety culture, MAAA members pose no new risk to aviation safety.

The MAAA has a registration system in place which records all details required by Government.

All members have a registration number which can quite easily be used to identify a model or member.

All members are issued with an identification card detailing their aero modelling skills and appointments.

The MAAA has an incident and accident management system which shares our collective learning's to make improvements to ensure the sport is safe now and in the future.

If you decide to complete the consultation document, we ask that the major focus of your feedback be placed on the strengths of the MAAA, the MAAA member safety culture, State Organisations, clubs and training requirements, together with the excellent working relationship with CASA. The reason for a unified approach is that it will strengthen our community position and increase the best outcomes for our members.

Respecting our current model aviation safety nature

Any CASA Regulations should respect the current model aviation safety culture of All MAAA members regardless of the flying site. The MAAA Membership system already provides a registration system and the instruction and wings proficiency scheme of the MAAA far exceeds any online accreditation test proposed by CASA which should not be established to undermine the MAAA's practical safety outcomes.

The outcomes the Executive would like to see are:

MAAA members due to the safety culture of the organisation are exempt from registration when flying model aircraft at any legal location.

The MAAA membership registration system become the official government registration system for members.

The members MAAA registration card becomes the members government/CASA identification.

No additional fees, other than MAAA membership, are required for federal registration.

Should any MAAA Members wish to make a submission on the Public Consultation process and the MAAA Executive encourage you to do so, please remember the above pertinent information.

Please contact your State association for future guidance on positive submissions to CASA.

Consultation document link:

https://consultation.casa.gov.au/regulatory-program/pp1816us/consult_view/

Until next time,

Neil Tank
President