

John Twomey 3365. My nomination and materials for publication in my support.

I am a past President and Secretary of the VHPA serving on the Committee for 3years in the 90's and 3years in the 00's and hold Advanced Hang-glider and Restricted Paraglider ratings.

I believe the first responsibility of the HGFA is to regulate a high standard of training for those would be pilots attracted to our sports and to encourage and support their development into knowledgeable, capable and self sufficient decision makers. To achieve this we have to first attract them and then retain them. To retain them we need to provide a supportive structure which begins with supportive experienced individual pilots, SO's and SSO;s and continues through Clubs to State and Regional Associations, Special Interest Groups and concludes with the HGFA Board and its Committees. We need to foster a culture of involved participation, an interest in belonging and joining in, a sense or feeling of community. We have to encourage our pilots' active interest in the support of other pilots on site in Clubs, State Associations, Regional Associations and Special Interest Groups.

I was a "yes" vote candidate in the recent Special General Meeting the outcome of which is not known at the time of writing this nomination for the election of the new Board taking office in April 2010. The 'yes' vote candidates by consensus developed a policy agenda on which we broadly agree. These will continue to be actionable for the SGM candidates during the term of the new committee. Please visit [www.flywa.com.au](http://www.flywa.com.au) to view my commonly proposed extended policies and views regarding the present HGFA management and the way forward for our sports management.

My views are summarized as follows:

Members of the current Board have inappropriately:

1. Increased the HGFA annual fee (up to 56%) when holding \$500,000 + in reserves.
2. Retained what was your State/regional fees component.
3. Acted contrary to the HGFA Rules (Constitution) and member's rights and interests.

I propose to remedy these matters.

Current Board members have placed our sense of community in jeopardy by: Ignoring input from the membership, ignoring input from State/regional associations, ignoring the Rules (constitution), denying members rights under the Rules, denying a members right to access records (membership, statistical, financial and legal), ignoring and not reporting the views of individual Board members, inappropriately threatening legal action, misrepresenting our financial situation in support of the fee increase, claiming to possess nonexistent legal advice (at the last AGM), improper selective Minutes keeping, poor fiscal management, illegal removal of a Board Member and supporting inappropriate use by the GM of his disciplinary powers and

delays in proceedings and maintaining a non transparent disciplinary process. Further they have frustrated the ability of concerned individuals and groups to inform the membership by restricting access to the magazine and withholding members postal and email addresses to frustrate democratic action, even to frustrate a legal SGM conducted earlier in the year ( see my article Soaring magazine July 09 Edition).

At the first Board meeting the new Board decided to bring in huge unnecessary fee increases (56%). Contrary to their claims the fee increase was not necessary as we had ample reserves (\$500,000 +) to meet all contingencies including a possible but unlikely call by our insurers to pay their full yearly premium in advance. You were told by the General Manager that such an insurance call "could be devastating to the organisation" (Soaring Mag., Sept. 08, Page 42, Para. 2), this was not true. The HGFA's last audited statement of its financial position (see 07/08 accounts, Page 6, attached) showed we had reserves of \$500,000 + on 30 June 2008. Also, we had traded in profit for the two previous financial years. A CPI increase was appropriate.

Further they decided to take the relatively low State/ Regional fees component (\$20 to \$50 per person) and keep those also, effectively curtailing the States/ regions ability to fund State operations, maintain sites and fund other Club and State/ regional initiatives including site procurement. The taking of State/Regional fees is highly detrimental to our sports of Paragliding and Hang-gliding which are not airport based. The loss of reliable state operational funding will lead to poor site maintenance, loss of sites and increases in Club fees. The high fees are losing us members and membership numbers are now a Board secret, as is everything.

The neutering of the State/regional bodies will reduce volunteerism and increase less effectual centralized paid bureaucracy. If people do not have influence they will not have interest; you must engage them. This GM and Board in assuming all funds and power are destroying HGFA institutions. This recently included the Safety and Operations Committee (Holtkamp, Wenness, and other respected volunteers) which the GM first ignored and recently disbanded. They were disbanded after offering constructive criticism of a proposed GM/Board policy. Their comments addressed safe training operations.

Regarding improper actions by some of the Board, here are some examples: The excesses of the Board are exemplified by the sacking of Board Member Brian Webb by the 5 board members named for removal in this Special General Meeting. The 5 met then phoned Brian and asked him to resign, he declined. They then presumed to remove him citing Rule 6.3 from the Constitution claiming it gave them the power to remove him, it does not. A board member can only be removed at a General Meeting, Rule 6.23 and 6.24 headed "Removal of member". The membership elected Brian and only you in General Meeting can remove him; as we are asking you to remove that same 5 now.

The GM and President in their Reports in July Soaring mislead you regarding Brian by suggesting he had left the Board to pursue other interests, not true, they sacked him. Brian was his own man and had his own voice so he was side lined, he was often kept out of decision making and out of Board email traffic. He is still constitutionally a member of the board and one of the three named new members was a pretender until the very recent resignation of Don Cramer. Now there are only 3 elected Members left on the Board.

The President implies in his column in July Soaring that nominations were called for the Board casual vacancies, which is not true, the 5 offered their friends the positions attempting to maintain control and to partly negate this Special General Meeting.

The latest resignation of Don Cramer sees the loss of the last of the Board Members that we believed we could have had some rapport with as he at times voiced an independent view on Board policies. Recently Don Cramer and Brian Webb were openly critical of the Board and the GM for the arbitrary and inappropriate use by the GM of his disciplinary powers. They in fact offered their support and apologies to the recipient of his attention Mr Maderson Ford. I believe this was the critical factor that led to Don's final resignation. Both Brian Webb and Don Cramer have wished us good luck with the SGM.

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