

**Meeting opened: 10:00AM, Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Mercure Hotel, Wollie Creek**

Board Members present: Javier Alvarez (JA), Stephen Clark (SC), Paul Coffey (PC), Mark Mitsos (MM), Brian Webb (BW), Geoff White (GW). Apologies: Bill Moyes, Don Cramer. Also present: General Manager, Chris Fogg (CF); Guest speaker: Honan Insurance broker, Wayne Cottier; 20 members and 3 non-members.

**1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

Notwithstanding an objection from member Chris Drake about reports from all previous Annual General Meetings not being included in the minutes, the following motion was put:

**Motion 08-25:**

***MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:***

*Moved: PC; seconded: JA, that the minutes of the previous AGM be accepted as published. CARRIED.*

**2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

President, Javier Alvarez read his President's Report.

**3. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Treasurer, Mark Mitsos, read his Treasurer's Report and presented to the meeting a PowerPoint presentation of extracts from minutes of previous Board meetings which provided historical context in relation to increased membership fees this year.

**4. AUDITOR'S REPORT:**

General Manager, Chris Fogg, presented the Auditor's Report on behalf of the Auditor. However, following from an observation by member Chris Drake, it was soon evident that there were discrepancies in the figures as given by the Auditor, so the Auditor's Report was withdrawn and will be re-presented to the members as soon as possible.

**Action 08-29:**

***CORRECTED AUDITOR'S REPORT:***

*The GM, CF will arrange for the Auditor to provide a corrected Financial Report and investigate the best way to submit that report to the members.*

**5. INSURANCE REPORT:**

Guest speaker, Wayne Cottier of Honan Insurance brokers, started to speak to a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of the insurances held by the HGFA. He outlined some history of providers to the HGFA insurance and the claims history over time. He then went on to run through the scope of covers held within the HGFA insurance which he indicated are in many cases unique to the HGFA and which are not available to any other aviation organization within Australia or indeed anywhere else in the world.

The presentation ceased prematurely after a series of interjections were made from the floor, some of which were quite aggressive in nature. It was unfortunate that this guest of the HGFA was subjected to interjections, to the point where he felt he was unable to continue in the face of harassment and excused himself from the meeting. The insurance report was left as a tabled item.

**6. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:**

The General Manager, Chris Fogg, read his report on the activities of the HGFA during the preceding 12 months.

**7. SUB-COMMITTEES REPORT/S:**

Jos Weemaes lodged a report on behalf of the Picolight group. No other SARSIG reports were received. The Competition Committee report was accepted as per meeting minutes published in the Soaring Magazine and on the HGFA website.

**8. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS:**

*Motion 08-26:*

**ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS:**

*Moved: JA; seconded: PC, that all reports be received as presented. CARRIED.*

**9. ASSIGNMENT OF AUDITOR:**

The GM has been investigating options and has short-listed a few candidates for possible appointment as Association Auditor for the coming 12 months. After receiving an obviously erroneous report from the current Auditor (Point 4 above), the appointment of a replacement must be matter of serious consideration.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS ARISING:**

As there was no other formal business to be transacted, the President, Javier Alvarez, opened the meeting to general discussion and questions from the floor. As these discussions were wide-ranging and less than formal in terms of meeting procedure, these minutes will only reflect an overview of the proceedings. The informality of these discussions was accepted by the meeting in general to allow the free flow of comment from the floor.

**A. SOARING MAGAZINE:**

Questions were raised about the need for Soaring magazine, the possibility of it being replaced by an electronic version and whether investigations had been made to determine if savings can be made on the production and distribution costs of the magazine.

President JA replied that under the requirements of our CASA deed we must have a reliable and constant method of communication to members. Historically this has been accepted as via the magazine. The issue of the cost in producing this communication has been a contention for previous Boards with none finding any viable alternative. This Board continues with investigations of ways and means to reduce magazine costs.

**B. AMALGAMATION:**

It was suggested that members might be able to gain a better service by moving to amalgamate the HGFA with another flying organization. Amalgamation has been considered by this (and previous) Boards and the option remains one of the items for discussion at the Board meeting which was to follow this meeting. It was also suggested that in the longer term, the way forward could be for all of the sporting aviation organisations to amalgamate into the one organisation.

**C. "CHANGING" REASONS FOR FEE INCREASE:**

It was noted that different reasons for the need to increase fees were published in different sets of minutes and different official reports in Soaring.

It was pointed out to the meeting that there were many reasons contributing to the need for the fee rise and all the different reasons articulated and published were quite valid and were to be viewed cumulatively rather than exclusively. There is an inherent problem with communicating the complexity of all the contributing issues which make up the total need for the fee increase. The bottom line is that the fee

increase is needed to balance the books and to provide a future for the sport in general. The discussion drew out some of these issues which many of the attending members realised would be difficult to articulate in succinct terms.

**D. GETTING INFORMATION OUT TO THE MEMBERS:**

Some members present expressed the perception that the Board could be doing more about getting information out to the membership.

President Javier Alvarez responded that this board is committed to open, inclusive debate with respect to the operations of HGFA and the only reference we have to measure our performance is by comparison with recorded performance from the past. For example, the information published in Soaring magazine in both the General Manager's Report and the President's Report in the six months since the inauguration of the current Board has far outweighed that provided by any previous Boards. That is not to say that this Board cannot find ways to improve still further.

**11. BRAINSTORMING SESSION:**

The Chairman noted that the Board is in office to seek solutions to the development of the HGFA while being charged with the need to raise capital for projects for that development and at the same to maintain a viable cost to the membership and affordable interest to new members. Declaring that the Board does not have the sole monopoly on ideas the Chairman then called upon the membership present to offer ideas which could reduce costs, provide better service and to grow the organisation and be taken under consideration in the following Board meeting. The following represent the result of this Brainstorming Session:

**A. Marketing:**

The group noted that marketing is a primary means of drawing in new members. Some of the many marketing ideas discussed were more applicable to activities at club or SARSIG levels. It was noted that marketing on any level requires initial funding. The Board noted that funding for marketing has been included in the budget and that the HGFA is looking toward negotiations with a professional marketing group. It was noted while marketing companies would naturally have benefit in identifying target markets, etc., the HGFA should be cautious on the recommendations that come from professionals as they have also failed to deliver growth through their proposals in the past.

**B. Name of the Association:**

The name of the Association was raised as a topic with recommendations that it should be altered to better reflect the current demographic of the membership. It was noted that there is a topic heading on the HGFA Forum to vote for a suggested name change. It was also noted that the Forum voting page had only attracted 44 votes with the majority favouring retention of the current name. It was decided that there are more important issues to presently discuss but that this should remain lodged as an item for later referral.

**C. Honeymoon Fee for New Members:**

A suggestion was made that new members may be more inclined to join the organisation if there was a reduced fee for new members. Historically the new member fee has been higher than the renewal fees. This is predominantly due to the cost of new member packs (workbooks, Operations Manual, log book etc). These costs under this proposal would be worn by the general membership.

**D. Option of Fee Renewal for More Than One Year:**

It was suggested that discounted membership fees should be offered by those who wished to renew for 2, 3 or more years with progressive discounts for the longer the sign-up period.

**E. Reduced Fees for Pensioners and Students:**

Another suggestion was that there be the provision for reduced membership fees for bona-fide pensioners and students. It was noted from extracts of the Treasurers PowerPoint presentation that this suggestion had been considered by previous Boards and been rejected by them.

**F. Monthly Fees rather than Annual Fees:**

The ability to pay fees on a monthly basis rather than annually may be attractive to some members. The issue of having the full amount paid over the term and additional administration this may incur was also discussed. The GM noted to the meeting that this has been investigated with the Westpac Bank now initiating a new service whereby they provide a loan contract to the applicant and the bank looks after repayments from the applicant.

**G. Less Regulation:**

It was suggested that a return to a time of less flying regulation may make the sport more attractive. The resulting discussion determined that as attractive as this prospect may be, CASA seems to be moving in the direction of more regulation rather than less albeit through the passage of Part 149 and Part 103 where the regulation under 103 will be less prescriptive but the terms of operation will be set in the Operations Manual of the approved Recreation Aviation Administration Organisation (RAAO). The Board noted that the review of our Operations and Administration Manuals is a significant project for this exact reason and that the cost of this work has been duly considered in this budget.

**H. Self-Nomination:**

A self-nomination to the Board was received from a member and taken under advisement.

**12. NEXT MEETING:**

The next AGM will be held on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009 commencing at 10:00AM. A Board Meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September at the conclusion of the AGM. The meeting will then continue on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

**13. CLOSE OF MEETING:**

The close of the meeting was marked by a vote of thanks to the General Manager and the Board from the members present in recognition of their work and commitment to the HGFA. The vote of thanks was given under condition that the Board delivers on work proposed under the budget. It was recognized that Board members work long and hard in a voluntary capacity for the betterment of the Association. This vote of thanks was received with acclamation by the members present.

**Meeting closed: 3:15PM**