

Hang Gliding Federation of Australia
MINUTES of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

24th October 2009

Opened 10:15, Saturday 24th October 2009, Tullamarine Airport Motor Inn

Committee Members present: President Rob Woodward (RW), Vice-president Alex Jones (AJ), Secretary John Twomey (JT), Treasurer Raef Mackay (RM) and Ray Firth (RF). Apologies: Tracey Hayes, Peter Dower and Peter Wennersen. Also present: G.M. Chris Fogg (CF); Guest: Steven R. Walker, HGFA Auditor; 22 HGFA Members.

1. Welcome by HGFA President Rob Woodward;

Rob welcomed the members present to the AGM and the new five new Committee Members present introduced themselves.

2. Confirm Minutes of 2008 Annual General Meeting:

The Secretary John Twomey read the 2008 Minutes.

Chris Drake raised several aspects of the meeting not recorded in the 2008 AGM minutes;

1. The commitment to add the Reports presented at the 2007 AGM to the Minutes posted on the HGFA Webb site, and for future AGM Reports to be included with AGM Minutes in future, CD noted that again the 2008 Reports were not included with the 2008 AGM Minutes. (Chris Fogg advised JT that he had the 2008 Reports available on a Flash drive, they are to be supplied and added to the Web posted minutes.) **2.** The questioned Insurance agents advice that an aspect of our Insurance coverage initially claimed by the Committee to be already in place was not in fact at that time yet in place (it was put in place some time later). **3.** Motions put forward by CD for voting at the 2008 AGM being not presented, and the 2008 AGM debate and comments and decision of the Committee regarding the matter not being reported; particularly the Committee's claim they had legal advice supporting their decision not to put these motions; subsequently it was found no such legal advice existed.

Motion. Moved: RW, seconded JT that the 2008 AGM Minutes be accepted subject to notation of Chris Drake comments. **Carried.**

3. Report on the Special General Meeting Ballot:

The President Rob Woodward reported that all five (5) Motions put to the members at the SGM were passed and as a result there were now five new Committee members seated before them at the AGM. These new Committee members presented a brief off the cuff profile of themselves by way of introduction to the members present.

4. Reports on activities of the HGFA during the preceding financial year:

Presidents Report: Rob Woodward advised that the renewed Committee, having been in place for only a few weeks and meeting together from only late the previous day, could provide little information regarding HGFA activities in respect of the last financial year.

He reported that he had contacted the immediate past Office Bearers who were in place for the 08/09 financial year and invited them to provide Reports for the advice of the members but no such reports were forthcoming.

Further he advised that the renewed Committee would endeavor to communicate with all of our Regions and sports disciplines to move forward together in a manner differing to the recent Committee's authoritarian, uncooperative and poorly consultative way. He stated we have good infrastructure and smart pilots with skills and knowledge to assist with moving our sports forward through this recent rough period.

Treasurers Report: Raef Mackay reported he had come down from the Gold Coast early on Thursday in order to visit the HGFA Office and meet Trene Randles our Office Manager and see how the HGFA maintain their financial accounting and records and also study our general information systems and how they integrate. He said Trene was very good at her work. He has identified areas of expenditure for possible cost reductions and also extracted details in respect of some of these for analysis.

There was some discussion; Member Jason Howitt commented that while a trim, fit and efficient low cost organization is desirable, running a good organization is not just about cost. There was no disagreement with this statement.. RW stated that cost was very important to pilots he knows, JT stated that cost is important in retaining pilots for the long term through the financial pressures of marriage, children and retirement. RW said that pilots want proper operational conditions, basic member services but pay the minimum necessary.

Auditors Report: Steven R. Walker our Tumut based auditor gave a short history of his involvement with the HGFA since 1997 stating he helped set up our initial accounting system and has been further involved with MYOB and changes to our account structures under various Executive Officers; also HGFA is a non reporting entity and our audited financial statements are not very complicated.

Steve apologized for errors in the Y/E 08 financial report presented to the last AGM explaining that a draft copy had been mistakenly forwarded instead of the finalized version, this was later corrected; he added that the error was inexcusable.

Vice-president Alex Jones question inconsistencies between the 07/08 and 08/09 Income and Expenditure Statements in respect of some 2008 figures. Steve advised that the structure of some accounts changed in 08/09 and the earlier 08 figures were adjusted in the 08/09 Statement to enable proper comparison between 08 and 09 figures in the 08/09 Financial Report; he stated that the Profit sum and the Balance Sheet sums are closely consistent.

Jason Howitt asked how we can have such a high investment income from a relatively little invested sum and suggested the return might reflect a less than appropriate risk for the funds of our Federation. Steve also expressed some concern as to their location. It

was noted that our Non-Current Asset Investment had suffered a capital loss of approximately \$30,000 which detract considerably from our perceived profit.

Action Point. This investment will be reexamined and alternative appropriate investment options considered.

President Rob Woodward observed that the relationship between the Auditor and the HGFA had been constructive, supportive and effective over a long term.

Insurance Report: The Report from Honan Aviation Insurance was presented and commented on by the President Rob Woodward. He noted that:
 Group Liability Insurance was paid by and covered every member;
 Microlight Hull Insurance was an optional charge;
 In December 08 the Committee introduced Microlight Passenger Insurance for All Microlight Pilots at no extra charge above the standard HGFA membership fee (GM's Report provides details of this decision);
 NON Microlight Pilots must pay \$290.00 extra to obtain optional Passenger Insurance

Jason Howitt suggested that the HGFA look for opportunities to reduce insurance costs by pooling with similar organizations. Chris Fogg stated that our insurance premium level is high because of our perceived risk when operating from public land where other aviation organizations operate principally from Airports.

Motion. Moved: Chris Drake, Seconded: JT that the HGFA Office Insurance Receipts and Insurance Policies be inspected to establish that they reflect the Insurance Report.
Carried.

General Managers Report: A report from Chris Fogg was presented and he made comment on some aspects of that report as follows; our disciplines are still the cheapest forms of Aviation; he stated that the SGM had frustrated future marketing initiatives plus many other initiatives planned by the (now previous) Board; he noted the sad loss of Francis Rogallo and his contribution to our sports; special mention for Johnny Durand placing second in the worlds; referenced the high caliber of our CIVL Delegate Heather Mull who was also Meet Director for the recent HG Worlds; special mention was made of the tragic loss of Andrew Edney. Rob Woodward thanked the GM for his report.

Chris Fogg introduced Rob Van Der Klooster who was present for the awarding of a Life Membership.

Robert is a well known Victorian pilot, whose Life Membership was awarded for his long service to Hang-gliding, through events management, the Dynasoarers HG Club, being Club SSO, being perennial Club delegate to the VHPA and oft times Victorian SSO, and especially for his support of new pilots anywhere.

Rob VDK thanked the HGFA and expressed his love of Hang-gliding which he now does with his daughter. He thanked everyone involved and all his friends in the sport.

Resignation of Chris Fogg. The President Rob Woodward advised the AGM that the GM had tendered his resignation which had been accepted. Chris is to stay on for the four weeks of his notice to assist in a handover of his work. Rob thanked Chris for his work over many years, stating that he respected him for many reasons but had not been a supporter of his management style

The President Rob Woodward forecast many challenges in empowering the organization into the future, with many decisions to be made, including filling positions to meet our workload and obligations. Responsibilities and load is huge in the administration of our types of sports which cannot be met by having a meeting and then just walking away and leaving it to whatever individuals; assistance by capable members in various aspects of our sports administration is vital to success.

Motion. Moved: Rob Woodward, Seconded: Kevin Gosser that all Reports be accepted. **Carried.**

General Member Discussion/Input, Questions and Responses.

There was much discussion amongst all present at the AGM on the subject of funding distribution to operational areas with the withdrawal of the SARSIG Model. Andrew Shipley President of the Pico Club discussed his members' displeasure at not receiving their due benefit from State/Regional fees. A WM pilot present expressed similar displeasure.

Rob Woodward stated the discussion made us all more aware of various members' sensibilities regarding funding and organization, and that decisions regarding funding distribution must be integral with the organizations structural needs for the oversight and management of operations as laid down in our Operations Manual. There will be future discussions with all parties regarding funding distribution.

President Rob Woodward stated he was in possession of an email written by Committee Member Peter Wennersen (not present) sent that morning. The email was based on information received by him from the GM Chris Fogg. The email claimed serious misbehaviour and breeches of security of the highest level by the Secretary John Twomey, the Vice-president Alex Jones and Committee Member elect (April 2010 Board) Chris Drake (CD is a Computer Professional invited by Alex and John to assist them). RW read the email to the members present at the AGM, a copy is attached.

Secretary John Twomey responded to what he described as patently absurd claims as follows: We visited the Office to obtain information from the records of the Federation that would enable the new Office Bearers to come to the AGM somewhat prepared with knowledge particularly in respect of our finances and our ongoing financial commitments.

Further, as the previous Committee and the GM had unconstitutionally frustrated access to the records, the purpose of our visit was to redress that situation and begin obtaining the information we require as a Committee to manage the business of the HGFA. The Wennersen email absurdly infers that the HGFA Committee and its Office Bearers should

be restricted in accessing that information vital to them responsibly performing their function of managing the affairs of the HGFA.

JT, AJ & CD stated that at all times the Staff were treated with respect and consideration.

The Wennersen email contained three motions supposedly endorsed by Tracey Hughes and Peter Dower. These motions firstly proposed the suspension of JT, AJ and CD; secondly the suspension of anyone else on the “Board” who had prior knowledge or gave approval (which would be all five new Committee Members, and Office Bearers); and thirdly that they all be not be accepted onto the 2010 – 2012 HGFA “board’.

Secretary John Twomey pointed out that the motions were unconstitutional, that only the Whole membership voting in General Meeting with a Ballot conducted of the whole membership could remove a member of the Committee, the same way that the five new Committee members had gained Office by decision of the whole membership; and that the old Committee had not learnt anything from our SGM process, nor from the repercussions of the unconstitutional dismissal of Brian Webb by the previous Committee.

The Present decided to gauge the opinion of the AGM attendees by having them vote on the motions as proposed and he himself put each of the motions, in turn, to the attendees requesting a seconder: **No seconder was found for any of the three motions.**

Questions submitted by Tracey Hayes for discussion at the AGM.

Moved: Rob Woodward: Seconded: John Twomey; that as the submitted points for discussion were relating to issues the Committee had not had time to deal and deliberate on that they be referred to the HGFA Committee for discussion. **Carried.**

Signing of the Financial Report in front of HGFA members: Copies of the 08/09 Financial Report were signed by the President and Treasurer. These were for, submission to the NSW Department of Fair Trading, our Auditor Steve R Walker and for our Insurers.

Moved: President Rob Woodward, Seconded: John Twomey that the current Auditors Steven Walker and Associates of Tumut, NSW be retained for the Financial Year 2009/2010. **Carried.**

Andrew Shipley, President of the Pico Club and the Pico submission of “Proposed changes to the existing Operations Manual to allow current Paramotor operations in Australia to be compliant to regulations and increase Safety and Training.

Motion: Moved: Andrew Shipley, Seconded: Rob Van Der Klooster that the Pico presentation should be made immediately following the closure of the Annual General Meeting.

The President Rob Woodward declared the 2009 Annual General Meeting closed at 2-35 pm.