

## Submission To Enquiry into CASA

An important thing to realise about CASA is they appear not to be particularly interested in the safety of a great many people like myself. I'm a glider pilot and an RAAus pilot, and the most dangerous thing I do in flying is forced on me by CASA or Airservices. CASA can't escape the responsibility here because they have a duty to bring safety concerns to the forefront, even when the culprit is Airservices.

Both of these organisations are regulation-enforcers, and they clearly have a corporate culture of acting as fearless red-tape policemen, but not necessarily as champions of aviation safety for all of us who fly. The government has given these agencies enormous amounts of power to interfere in my flying life and this has had the effect of making it less safe.

Here are examples of what I'm saying and what I've lived with for 40 years.

In a single-engined plane or a glider, ALTITUDE = SAFETY. There is no doubt about this, an extra thousand feet of altitude can make all the difference between coming down among the trees and landing safety in the event of an engine failure or, in the case of a glider, in the event of having to fly through the sinking air of a rainstorm.

For 40 years I have been flying gliders and more recently an RAAus plane from Gawler, often to the East and South-East of Gawler. In obeying what I regard as dangerous height restrictions, I have been forced into paddock landings which were otherwise quite unnecessary.

This would have been more acceptable, if I had even once in 40 years seen another aircraft using the airspace, but the fact is that this airspace is many kilometres away from where the airliners go and I have never seen one of them or anything else, except for the occasional Perth-Melbourne airliner going overhead at 30,000 plus ft. In the meantime, I am restricted to 4,500 ft by a "safety" authority. Let me say this again: the airspace I was denied was UNUSED. Once I later rang and asked what traffic had been using that airspace and I was told that they didn't have to explain anything to the likes of me. \* See Footnote

It would be quite easy for a real safety authority, in many situations, to give "the likes of me" an extra thousand feet to significantly enhance our safety and do this without even slightly compromising the airline routes. They could refine the airspace maps to achieve this and enhance safety.

There are many such examples, just ask any GA or RAAus group about how they have to operate. There is an example of a flight which killed a party of overseas people for this reason. They were from Europe, and they flew into a mountain in the high-country north of Melbourne. They were babes in the wood when it came to Australian airspace regulations, and apparently nobody told them they were only allowed a small margin of height over the terrain at that point. These were people killed by our "safety" rules and regulations. I consider there would be other examples which could be checked out. Interestingly, at no time would it appear that the effect of dangerous height restrictions has been addressed in accident investigations.

It is important that the committee not be influenced by the idea that if you don't agree with the CASA line you will be "against air safety". The opposite is likely to be the case. They are a bureaucracy and like any bureaucracy, their agenda appears to be to get more and more power. This does not necessarily involve any real concern for the safety of many people like myself.

I would be prepared to give this evidence personally to the committee if required. I would be able to give dates and areas, and the "safety" authority would be unable to give details of what IFR traffic was using this airspace at those times because if there was I would have seen them and heard them over the radio.

In summary, I have operated safely for over 40 years despite, not because of, CASA. If I had an engine failure in some parts of the hills I would be fairly likely to damage my plane due to being too low to glide to a safe landing-area.

There are precedents for the sort of change being sought here. For example, the maximum height at which RAAus planes were allowed to fly was 5,000 feet even in areas away from more onerous restrictions, and when this was lifted, RAAus planes could fly to Tasmania with enhanced safety as they now have possible glide-paths to islands en-route.

Yours Sincerely,

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\*Footnote

I am sure that CASA/Airservices could produce a telephone-book size dossier of flights to dispute these statements, so to be more specific, the concern is for IFR flights in day VFR conditions between the heights of 4,500 ft and 5,500 ft in the area between 30 DME and 36 DME from Adelaide Tower in the region from Tanunda through to Palmer.

This area is the outer part of where the 4,500 ft step joins the 8,500 ft step.

Even if there were any such flights, the inconvenience to these flights would range from non-existent to trivial at the most, and this should have been weighed against the very great safety enhancement of the VFR aircraft using the area. It is my assertion that an airspace step of 5,500 ft could be put here so the steps would go from :

4,500ft at 20 DME (existing)

5,500 ft at 30 DME (my proposal)

8,500 ft at 36 DME (existing)

This would do a hundred times more for my safety than all the childish red-tape demands like what photos are in some file in some Canberra office. While this material would perhaps help in maintaining records, it would have absolutely no impact if you had an engine failure over the hills.

Airservices and CASA are likely to argue that refining airspace maps is too hard, but surely this is their job and surely the safety of ALL aviators should be their first priority.