

submission to the independent aviation safety regulation review panel:

Name: Roger Denholm

I am a Glider pilot and a member of the GFA. I have also spent many hours in light aircraft and helicopters in remote parts of Australia as part of my employment. I flew nearly weekly in the early 1970s and have returned to gliding in the last 7 years. I noted a stronger safety culture including more detailed training as well as significant aircraft performance increases had occurred in the intervening 30+ years.

A thriving aviation sector that includes strong Sport aviation engagement is important Australian resource. A pool of trained practising recreational pilots provides a resource from which future commercial, military and general aviation staff can be derived as required. As citizens of a nominally free country, reasonable access to nearly empty country skies should not be hampered by rulers and processes more appropriate for built up areas and commercial activities.

I request the panel consider:

- Aviation is no longer a professional or wealthy persons activity. However, the cost of obtaining and maintaining a GA license is driving people to lower cost kinds of recreational aviation.
- Regulation costs and processes have a greater impact on self funded recreational pilots.
- Affordable light aircraft of all kinds is encouraging greater participation.
- The steadily improving performance of recreational aircraft while remaining affordable means there will be more flying done by a broader cross section of the general community.
- This may cause more incidents due to a greater number of aviation participants, regardless of increasing safety training but does not signal a failure of regulation.
- Managing the increasing recreational aviation numbers should require an increased focus on affordable regulation approaches. If CASA maintains a co-operative relationship with the aviation participant organisations, effective regulation that is accepted by all the aviation community would be easier to maintain.
- An authoritarian approach will waste efforts on disputation and increase political dissent expressed to the relevant Ministers of the Crown.
- Punitive approaches to aviation tend to be counter-productive as open discourse on safety incidents will cease.

- A Ministerial Policy is urgently needed directing CASA to adopt a core mission objective to support recreational aviation. The citizens of Australia are the clients of CASA, not just commercial aviation companies. Already invidious comparisons with New Zealand pilots freedom to fly are common on Australian recreational airfields. For 30 years I have heard internationally travelled commercial pilots express derogatory opinions about the micro-management of Australian aviation.
- With country Shire Councils now owning airfields, recreational aviation is a steady revenue stream for them and the local communities. Temora and Brand Shire are examples. The Paragliding and Hang Gliding fraternities have their own centers of activity which have a positive funding flow to their chosen local communities.
- The Gliding Federation of Australia has a well developed set of operations and rules for managing gliding. GFA has effectively managed gliding on behalf of CASA and its antecedents for decades. This has resulted in high standards of training and flight safety at a low cost due to the volunteer nature of much of GFAs activities. It is logical to resolve any difficulties between government bodies and the GFA co-operatively to maintain this effective low cost administration of gliding.
- The urge to "Do Something" should be resisted if there is no definite persistent problem.

Thank you for your consideration of the importance of the Gliding Federation of Australia in the sport and recreational aviation sector.

Roger Denholm

