



## **Proposal to Update RAMS Training Arrangements**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to review RAMS existing training arrangements with a view to developing a training framework that is fit for purpose.

### **2. Overview of the current situation**

- RAMS does not have a documented training program.
- What we do have is a number of statements in the By-Laws, MOP161015 and methods of training that have evolved over time and are based on member's understanding of our By-Laws and MAAA rules and policy.
- The By-Laws and MOP161015 are not clear to the extent that some statements relating to training are contradictory and therefore some assumptions made with regard to training may be incorrect.
- Terms and definitions used are inconsistent.
- The lack of clear policy has resulted in a situation where members are unsure of the requirements to deliver training, and their liability should an accident occur.
- The only person approved to train is the Chief Flying Instructor.
- Currently all club flight training is undertaken by the Chief Flying Instructor and Instructor.
- The Chief Flying Instructor is under pressure to meet the demand and is generally only available most Sundays.
- Prospective members and Club Novices attending Club meetings on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are often disappointed that training is not always available on those days.
- As identified in the RAMS Risk Assessment, to attract and maintain membership levels, we must provide reasonable access to training.

### **3. Extracts from RAMS Documents Relating to Training**

- A Club Novice is not permitted to fly unless assisted/accompanied by a Club Flyer during any flying activities.*
- Under MAAA rules a non-licensed visitor or a prospective member may be allowed to operate a radio-controlled aircraft, (with due supervision and support by an approved Club Flyer) on only FOUR separate dates.*
- Aircraft flown by Club Novices will at all times operate within the boundaries of the Flying Field, under the guidance and supervision of an approved Club Flyer using the Buddy System. A Club Novice may fly without a buddy cord attached when approved to do so by the CFI, but must be accompanied in the pilot's box by an approved Club Flyer.*
- Aircraft flown by Club Flyers and Instructors will be operated in a manner to ensure the aircraft will land within the boundaries of the Flying Field.*
- Until a member passes their Bronze wing test, the student must only fly using the BUDDY CORD connection, with a certified Instructor or an assistant Instructor. The CFI or acting CFI will be the only person to approve solo flights and this will be when the student is deemed by the CFI, to be competent in controlling a model, in a safe and satisfactory manner. This will be when a student is very close to taking the flight test, so the student can gain experience with solo flying. The student must always be accompanied in the pilot box with an Instructor by their side when flying solo. Club planes being used for student training MUST always be flown with a buddy connection. The student must, as soon as possible be encouraged to fly their own aircraft, as we want to keep the flying time on club aircraft as low as*

*possible. The student should learn to fly their own plane as they are not allowed to take their solo test with a club plane.*

#### **4. Terms used in RAMS Documents Relating to Training**

- a. *Club Novice, Club Flyer, Approved Club Flyer, Accomplished Flyer, Student, CFI or Acting CFI, Certified Instructor, Instructor, Assistant Instructor, Trainer, Non-Licensed Visitor, Buddy System, Buddy Cord, Buddy Connection, aircraft and plane are all terms used in RAMS documents that are related to training.*
- b. There are definitions for some of these terms, different terms for the same definition, and for others there is no definition. It is quite reasonable to ask what is the difference between:
  - i. A Club Flyer, Approved Club Flyer, Accomplished Flyer and Qualified Member. What is the difference? Who did the approving and on what criteria? It looks like the only approved Club Flyer is the Chief Flying Instructor. What is the member qualified in and what have they accomplished?
  - ii. A Club Novice and Student. Probably the same person.
  - iii. CFI and acting CFI. Who or what is an Acting CFI?
  - iv. Certified Instructor, Instructor, Assistant Instructor, and Trainer. Who knows. Is the certified instructor qualified in any way?
  - v. Visitor and Non-Licensed Visitor. Could be the same person?
  - vi. Buddy System, Buddy Connection and Buddy Cord. We all know what this is, so we should use uniform terminology.
  - vii. Aircraft and Plane. Clear but maybe not so without clear definitions.

#### **5. Initial Summary**

- a. Statements and terms used in RAMS By-Laws and Code of Conduct and other documents are inconsistent, sometimes contradictory and consequentially cause confusion. From time to time as circumstances have changed, by-laws and definitions have been adapted/changed to suit those circumstances, and over time inconsistencies have crept in to the extent that whilst the intent of our approach to training is vaguely apparent, the details of how that is to be achieved are unclear. The evidence provided above demonstrates the current arrangements are not fit for purpose and need to be re-modelled.

#### **6. What does the MAAA require with regard to training**

- a. *Flight Proficiency State/Territory Associations and clubs are encouraged to promote the use of the MAAA Flight Proficiency Scheme. See the Procedure Guidelines for the Award of Wings (MOP027) and Instructors Handbook available at [://www.maaa.asn.au](http://www.maaa.asn.au)*
- b. We are only encouraged to promote the MAAA Flight Proficiency Scheme and indeed we have adopted that scheme but there is no regulation, policy or recommendation that dictates how we manage training at our Club provided we do not contravene Part 101 CASR, MAAA MOP, Policy, Recommendations and Guidelines, State and Local Council By-Laws and our own By-Laws and Code of Conduct. We are required to document our decision process and that generally means that decisions need to be risk assessed to ensure that any associated risk is kept as low as reasonably practicable. (ALARP)

- 7. The Ideal World Scenario** – A member of the public is interested RC aircraft and turns up at a Club flying day to seek information and advice, which is provided. The member of the public decides to proceed and attends a Club flying day, signs in as a visitor, is shown around, receives some advice, a Club Welcome Pack and a free introductory trial flight using an aircraft with Buddy System. They are told they can have up to 4 visits including introductory trial flights and are so enthused that they decide to join the club, fill out the application, pay the fee and become a Prospective Club Member. They turn up at flying days, are Inducted, and when their membership application has been approved, they become a club member and a Trainee Pilot, and receive a Pilot Log Book. Whenever they turn up at a flying day there is either the Chief Flying Instructor, or the Instructor or an Assistant Instructor available and their training progresses well using aircraft with the Buddy System. As instructed, they record the training details in the Pilot Log Book signed off by the instructor providing that training. After a number of lessons, they are feeling quite confident and demonstrate to the Chief Flying Instructor or the Instructor that they have acquired adequate skills to safely fly their own aircraft solo. The Chief Flying Instructor or Instructor endorses the Pilot's Log Book to fly solo. They no longer have access to club aircraft but may fly their own aircraft solo to practice for the bronze rating test provided they are accompanied and assisted by either the Chief Flying Instructor, the Instructor or an Assistant Instructor. As there is always instruction available, they quickly improve with practice and are ready to take the bronze rating test. The test is conducted by the Chief Flying Officer or the Instructor who will notify the Management Committee that the Trainee Pilot has achieved the bronze rating and the Trainee Pilot is now a Pilot. The Secretary forwards details to the MAAA and the new Pilot is awarded a Bronze Wings badge and updated membership card evidencing their rating. That sounds reasonable and straightforward but cannot be achieved with the existing arrangements.
- 8. The Proposal** – Provided members agree that transition to an "Ideal World Scenario", is not only a worthwhile Club aim but also in the best long-term interests of the Club, there are a number of changes that need to be implemented. Our current training arrangements are defined within our By-Laws and Code of Conduct. It is the view of the author that the best and simplest way forward is to simply review, update, modify, add and remove some of those definitions so that they more clearly define roles, responsibilities and a training pathway. From time-to-time all organisations need to reassess the way they operate to ensure those operations remain fit for purpose and the RAMS Risk Assessment indicates that the time has come for us to update. Below are the proposed changes to the By-Laws required to achieve this outcome. No doubt some of these will be subject to change as and when members identify possible errors, problems and weaknesses. Club By-Laws and Code of Conduct can be changed at any time and it is recommended that any changes made be subject to review as part of the annual Risk Assessment review to ensure they achieve the intended outcomes.
- 9. Let's Call a Spade a Spade**
- a. Why do we use the term Club Flyer instead of Pilot.
  - b. Club Novice instead of Trainee Pilot.
- 10. Pathway to becoming a Pilot – Objective and Definitions to Improve Training**  
It is expected that more experienced, knowledgeable and skilled pilots will pass on knowledge and skills to less experienced Trainee Pilots and new Pilots within the Club's safety culture. The objective of the proposed changes to the By-Laws and Code of Conduct is to clearly define roles and responsibilities and create a standard pathway to becoming a Pilot.

- a. **Member of the Public** – A Person who is not a club member, associate member or visitor and has no association with the club.
- b. **Visitor** – A person who is not a club member attending a club meeting who has correctly provided details and signed the visitor book. A visitor may sign in and attend club meetings on 4 occasions only and may receive introductory trial flights if available. Further attendance and training flights are conditional on becoming a club member.
- c. **Prospective Club Member/Associate Member** – A person who is not a club member but has paid the membership fee and provided an application form to become a club member/associate member, but has not yet been accepted by the Management Committee or recorded in the MAAA member register.
- d. **Club Member** – A person who is a paid-up member, recorded in the MAAA member register.
- e. **Associate Member** – A person who is a paid-up associate member, recorded in the MAAA member register.
- f. **Visiting Pilot** – A person who is not a club member, attending a club meeting who has correctly provided details and signed the visitor book, and provided evidence that they are a full member of an MAAA associate club and have achieved at minimum an MAAA Bronze rating. A visiting pilot may operate their own aircraft solo provided the aircraft are within the scope of their MAAA rating and must comply with all rules governing the Club operations. A visiting pilot may sign in and attend flying day meetings on 4 occasions only. Further attendance is conditional on payment of the associate membership fee, application to become an associate member, acceptance by the Management Committee and their details recorded in the MAAA member register.
- g. **Trainee Pilot** – A club member who has not yet achieved an MAAA Bronze, Silver or Gold rating. A trainee pilot may only operate aircraft using a Buddy System under instruction of the Chief Flying Instructor, Instructor or Assistant Instructor. A trainee pilot is required to maintain a log book up to and including their bronze rating test and record dates and details of training provided which must be signed off by the Chief Flying Instructor, Instructor or Assistant Instructor providing that training.
- h. **Trainee Pilot (Solo)** – A club member who has not yet achieved an MAAA Bronze, Silver or Gold rating, who has been assessed by the Chief Flying Instructor or Instructor to be suitably advanced in their training that they are capable of operating their own aircraft solo without a buddy system with the intention of practice and training for the rating test, and provided they are accompanied in the Pilot Box by either the Chief Flying Instructor, Instructor or Assistant Instructor. The Chief Flying Instructor or Instructor will record in the pilot's log book the term "Solo", dated and signed. Once a Trainee Pilot has achieved a solo rating, they will no longer use Club aircraft for further training and practice. Other conditions may apply.

- i. **Pilot** – A club member who has achieved at minimum an MAAA Bronze rating who may operate their own aircraft solo provided the aircraft are within the scope of their MAAA rating.
- j. **Restricted Pilot** – A club member who has not yet achieved an MAAA Bronze rating and has little or no prospect of obtaining such a rating due to a disability or age-related issue who has been tested by the Chief Flying Instructor or Instructor and demonstrated that they are capable of meeting the minimum bronze rating test requirements operating their own aircraft in safe mode only; or, it is a pilot who is considered by themselves or the Chief Flying Instructor, or Instructor or the Management Committee to be no longer capable of meeting the minimum bronze rating standard unless they operate their own aircraft in safe mode only. A Restricted Pilot may operate their own aircraft solo provided the aircraft is operated in safe mode only and the fail-safe condition is safe mode with the motor off. Operation in any other mode is not permitted unless the Restricted Pilot is accompanied in the pilot box by the Chief Flying Instructor, Instructor or Assistant Instructor. A Restricted Pilot classification is subject to Management Committee approval and is a club classification that is only recognised at the Club Flying Field, and is not recognised by the MAAA or any other club. Other conditions may apply. It is considered that the Restricted Pilot classification is similar to a Restricted Vehicle Driver's License, permitting a limited number of members the opportunity to enjoy or continue to enjoy club flying with imposed safety limitations, whilst maintaining risk to a level that is ALARP.
- k. **Chief Flying Instructor** – A club member who has achieved an MAAA Instructor rating and has been appointed to the position of Chief Flying Instructor by the Management Committee to oversee all aspects of pilot training, and to instruct, assess and test trainee pilots for their Bronze, Silver and Gold ratings. The Chief Flying Instructor will review Trainee Pilot's Log Books and sign off training provided. The Chief Flying Instructor will notify the Management Committee when a Pilot passes a Bronze, Silver or Gold ratings test.
- l. **Instructor** – A club member who has achieved an MAAA Instructor rating who is not the Chief Flying Instructor but may from time to time as the Management Committee feels fit, agree to temporarily fill the role of Chief Flying Instructor. The Instructor may conduct all aspects of pilot training, instruct, assess and test trainee pilots for their Bronze, Silver and Gold ratings. The Instructor will review Trainee Pilot's Log Books and sign off training provided. The Instructor will notify the Management Committee when a Pilot passes a Bronze, Silver or Gold ratings test.
- m. **Assistant Instructor** - A club member who has achieved at minimum the MAAA Bronze rating who has demonstrated to the Chief Flying Instructor that they are suitably experienced, knowledgeable and skilled to undertake some aspects of training for bronze rating test. At a minimum the Assistant Instructor must attend the Chief Flying Instructor's Basic Safety and Theory Course and pass a multiple-choice written test to demonstrate they have adequate knowledge of Part 101 CASR, MAAA MOP, Policy and Recommendations and the Club By-Laws and Code of Conduct. Assistant Instructors are required to comply with the Chief Flying Instructor's guidelines.

All Assistant Instructors must at a minimum be capable of delivering the following training, *Introduction to learning to fly RC aircraft, Safety procedures, Transmitter and aircraft controls, Aircraft air worthiness and safety checks/procedures as detailed in the MAAA Instructors Handbook*. Assistant Instructor may stand next to Trainee Pilot Solo in the Pilot Box and provide instruction and advice whilst the Trainee operates their own aircraft to practice for their bronze test rating. Additionally, Assistant Instructors may be considered by the Chief Flying Instructor as being suitably experienced, knowledgeable and skilled to conduct introductory trial flights and flight training using aircraft with the Buddy System. The Assistant Instructor will review Trainee Pilot's Log Book and sign off training provided. Assistant Instructors will not conduct MAAA rating tests. Other conditions may apply. The Chief Instructor will notify the Management Committee when a member is considered qualified to be an Assistant Instructor and the Management Committee reserves the right to accept or reject that nomination. Upon acceptance the appointment will be confirmed and recorded.

This proposal does not address all inconsistencies that may be found in the By-Laws and Code of Conduct. It is aimed only at addressing those that relate to the provision of training. Member's opinions and views are important to this process so please have your say and get involved.

Once member's queries are generally satisfied, a formal proposal will be presented to the management committee for approval.

Risks associated with the new training arrangements will be recorded in the RAMS Risk Assessment and will then be subject to annual review. It is envisioned that the first review will be conducted prior to the AGM so that a report can be presented to the membership for approval.

## **End of Proposal**

Michael Hyde