

The Year in Summary

One of the biggest challenges for any small aero club is that they neither have the scale or resources to easily overcome the major changes that come up. We started the year without a full time CFI. The extensive recruitment process that we conducted to find a permanent CFI resulted in several good candidates, and during this process we were also presented with an option to outsource the flight and training operations to an independent operator. Going through the recruitment process made us really consider what our club is about and we confirmed that it is a membership club – with members contributing their efforts for the membership. This help us to stick with our thorough recruitment process and we managed to get Andrew Sims (Simsy) on board in late November.

Simsy was a former C-Cat instructor at the club and he has done a great job in leading the team and building the flying hours back up. I have to say the vibe at the club has improved a great deal thanks to the energy Simsy has bought with him along with a committed and enthusiastic instructing team, consisting of Jelle and Iain, who recently joined us, along with support from a great team of casual contractor staff, mostly working full time as pilots but who enjoy instructing in their spare time and give their time to help out (more on that later).

With the major changes in the first half of the year it was a tough environment to operate in, with the club being forced to close some days due to lack of supervision for our C-Cat instructors. We will always be faced with this challenge when key people move on, but we are making succession planning a key focus area to ensure continuity going forward and therefore minimising this disruption. As usual the other biggest impact on the club is the weather. The number and frequency of flyable weekend days hugely influences our operations. A bad run of weather results in people getting out-of-sync flying, as we all know – consistency is key.

Another major goal that we focussed on this year involved updating the business plan for next five years. Andrew Braddick has presented this in an easy-to-read format we can more easily digest. We look for your feedback on this tonight.

Our Team (most important success factor to our club)

We started the year with only two C-Cats and no CFI. In the interim some very fine people were keeping us running: Dan Thompson was our acting CFI, in addition to holding a full time job at Life Flight Trust, he and his wife had their first child and then had Vincent's fold with massive uncertainty. Through all of this Dan maintained a great disposition and ensured operations continued as smoothly as possible, a massive thanks to Dan; Marc Brogan, our former CFI, also spent many a Saturday covering & instructing at the club, keeping up with operations & checking in with Dan while also holding down his full time job at CAA, again a big thanks.

Then through instructor contacts a few very helpful people came along to help out, Richard Fraser, James Hillson and Bronnie all started helping out where they could and have continued to do so. To say these folks helped out would be an understatement, in addition to ensuring things ticked along through instructing they also went above and beyond expectations, helping to clean and tidy the place up, organise and run school visits and run ground courses. A massive thanks.

It has also highlighted a great approach for the club having a range of casual contract instructors available who all have full time careers elsewhere in aviation and others areas, who then bring that great experience and enthusiasm to the club. It also provides us with a cover when our permanent

team which, by definition, has to be fairly limited in number to be financially viable. We know at some point instructors and the CFI move on in their careers. Having this wider, very experienced team of people who can help keep the club running in times of change, such as getting a new CFI on board, is a great benefit to us.

Given this progression we have actively worked on how we develop the team with a view to B-Cats and potential CFI's. We want to make WAC a place instructors want to come to as part of their career development and progression. Simsy is actively progressing plans with the WAC team to build the next B -Cat and have development plans in place.

So the current instructing team is:

- Andrew Sims – CFI - WAC
- Jelle – C-Cat (out of supervision) - WAC
- Iain Abel – C-Cat (under supervision) - WAC
- James Hillson- A-Cat & full time Air NZ First Officer on Q300's
- Marc Brogan – A-Cat & full time Flight Examiner at CAA
- Richard Fraser – C-Cat & full time Life Flight First Officer
- Dan Thompson – B-Cat (VFR & IFR) & full time Life Flight Captain
- Bronwyn Scott – C-Cat & full time IT Team Leader
- Rochelle Flemming – B-Cat & full time MetService Forecaster – just considering coming back into club instructing after having had a new baby
- Blair Frampton – C-Cat – full time Safety Officer at Life Flight just coming back into it also

While on the Admin front we have:

- Jess Corbett of Ladybird Consulting who keeps the cogs turning at the Club with her fabulous book keeping & payroll processing services.

Thanks for the all the efforts from a very positive, experienced and capable team.

And let's not forget the team members who have moved on during the year:

- Jamie Dunbar has moved to a flight school in Adelaide. I would like to acknowledge his efforts keep things going when we had no permanent CFI for many months.
- Karl Zimmerman was a stalwart instructor for the club, and very deservedly got a job with Air NZ on the Beech 1900.
- Sam Mexted also moved onto a flying job up on the East Coast.

Finance

Despite having no permanent CFI for the first seven months of the year we managed to come in at a loss of just under \$3k. \$3k loss can occur in one month if our hours are down below 100, so the margins are tight. This is a very good result considering the environment we were operating in. However this includes about \$17k of interest from our term deposits, so really a loss from operating activities of -\$19k, which is not surprising given the challenges we faced. The good thing however, as noted in previous years with our Paper Aviator and Xero accounting system, is the numbers are very visible and transparent to everyone. We don't have any 'fat' left in the system and need about 130 hours per month to break even. So a few bad weekend days can make a big difference while a few good weekends can really boost the hours.

We took the reluctant decision to impose a credit card surcharge during the year as credit card fees were becoming a significant expense item.

Debtors have continued to be a frustration during the year. Much staff and Committee effort has gone into chasing up members who don't pay their bills – this is time that could have been spent on more productive matters. We are taking a harder line on debtors and we now have a relationship with Baycorp and we will follow up the worst offenders.

On a more positive note, we also made the decision to reduce the membership subscriptions to \$199 for early-bird renewals to both encourage new members and give a little back to the loyal membership.

Constitution

We again briefly considered a review of the constitution however due to updates anticipated to constitution law we decided, as last year, to leave this for now. Our constitution is not 'broken' – just a little dated and inflexible. We also discussed the presidential line approach, with the three year cycle of President Elect, President and immediate past President, and whether this really delivered what was required. We normally find a decrease in the interest of the past Presidents, so not as much follow through as intended. One year in the position of President is not long and means we must continue to find a new volunteer every year. However, for now this remains unchanged and we do have a new volunteer for President Elect – Amy.

IFR Training

We now have a twin IFR aircraft available (ROC) which is not far off having full IFR capability, the GPS approval is still pending. The challenge here the lack of instructors who meet the necessary requirements for IFR instruction, meaning we have been solely reliant on Dan making himself available outside of a full time job and family. We also need a single engine IFR aircraft to help members build the IFR hours. We need to consider how we would get more available IFR instructors to provide the consistency for instructing and offering such a rating. Simsy has plans to complete his multi-engine instructors rating in the near future. We extended the trial for an additional year with an expectation of a minimum number of hours to break even when compared to the equivalent of two single aircraft in the hanger.

Tenure at Wellington International Airport

Our current lease runs out in 2017, which is not that far away. We had a good formal meeting with WIAL earlier in the year with a positive approach taken by all. They have now sent through a draft

proposal for potential leasing arrangements for the old Vincent Aviation hanger, in addition to the Gibson hanger. At the meeting all of their signals have been for a longer term view of the WAC being on the field quite a bit longer. With larger jet fleets operating into Wellington there are actually less flights than before so they see us remaining on the airfield for another 10-15 years. We will aim to get the lease extended as soon as we can and will consider the other proposal for leading arrangements.

Dependent on this leasing arrangement proposal and/or a longer term tenure this will influence whether we look for a relocatable building to replace the Port-a-coms or not and start other facilities improvements.

Gibson Hangar

The Gibson hanger has finally been sealed for water tightness on both the north and south sides. We were almost at a point of having to close the club on the wet days, with a significant amount of water coming into our the club rooms . WIAL have been investigating the possibility of repairing the hanger doors so that they will close . Initial investigations seem positive and indicate that this will be a bit cheaper than expected, so all going well this will happen over the next few months. On wet and/or windy days it is very evident how dirty the aircraft get, so doors are essential to protect aircraft from the elements. WIAL are also looking to upgrade the kitchen & bathrooms.

Dependent on our options with WIAL we will need to improve the club rooms and the front of the club, which looks less than inviting and doesn't present the most professional image to potential new members or our current members.

Aircraft and Aircraft Leases / Hangarage

The fleet is currently:

3x PA38	ZK-ESG, WAC, and TAW
1x PA28 Warrior	ZK-MBG
1x C172	ZK-FLT
1x C172-SP	ZK-CEO
1x CJ6 Nanchang	ZK-MAO

In April 2015 the Nanchang reformed a new syndicate for another five years. The syndicate got close to losing the aircraft but with some hard effort by Erich Livengood we have managed to get enough people to keep MAO at Wellington. We are still looking for another 4-5 syndicate members if you know of someone interested.

WAC & TAW have been on a very long upgrade programme that should bring them to near new condition, with upgraded interiors, some glass cockpit avionics and mini Ipads. These upgrades are expected to conclude soon! MBG and FLT have also been repainted.

Our aircraft leases are aligned to the hanger lease so we need to review the fleet mix during 2015/16 to decide on our future needs with a year's notice to all concerned. The executive have put some effort into outlining criteria for the fleet we need and criteria on prioritising space in the hanger to ensure fairness to interested parties. If we can make the lease agreement proposal, involving the old Vincent Aviation hanger work, then there will be plenty of space.

Other aircraft in the hanger that are off-line are JWH (C206), LGT (Giles G-200) and FHQ (PA-28)

Flying Hours

As you will see from the monthly flying hours summary, our flying can fluctuate from one month to the next. I can't emphasise enough how the weather can affect the bottom line. Also really obvious is the lower hours without a permanent CFI in the first half of the year and how much these picked up in the second half with a full team. Simsy and the team have certainly been making an effort to get members out on nice weekdays with some good encouraging emails.

Year	Month	Flying Hours	Staff Training	Ferry/Maintenance	Dual Hours	Total
2011	April	188	2	5	62.15	195
2011	May	139	2	1	60.76	142
2011	June	151	1	5	73.76	157
2011	July	137	2	0	77.3	139
2011	August	132	2	1	75.9	135
2011	September	160	6	1	99.6	167
2011	October	129	11	3	80.45	143
2011	November	169	3	0	105.6	172
2011	December	216	6	5	142.4	227
2012	January	183	5	0	94.5	188
2012	February	235	15	0	136.2	250
2012	March	149	4	0	112.5	153
2012	April	178	2	0	101	180
2012	May	127	11	1	67.4	139
2012	June	96	13	2	49.8	110
2012	July	152	2	5	92.2	159
2012	August	107.5	2	0.5	61	110
2012	September	86.3	0.5	0.5	41	87.3
2012	October	84.2	3.1	0.7	62.9	88
2012	November	126	0.5	1	79.2	127.5
2012	December	120.8	0.8	0.5	75.1	122.1
2013	January	165.9	2	0.8	79.8	168.7
2013	February	168.7	1.5	1.5	81.3	171.7
2013	March	138.7	0.9	0.8	67.3	140.4
2013	April	61.5	4.2	0	28.1	65.7
2013	May	132.2	2.7	1	75	135.9
2013	June	96.4	0.9	0	47.2	97.3
2013	July	129.4	6	0	55.8	135.4
2013	August	112.1	1.7	0	51.6	113.8
2013	September	83.3	0	0	37.6	83.3
2013	October	75.8	0.4	0.1	34.3	76.3
2013	November	97.9	1.9	0	52.6	99.8
2013	December	105.6	0.2	0.1	52	105.9
2014	January	117.2	0.9	2.3	56.7	120.4
2014	February	119.6	0.3	0.1	61.1	120
2014	March	111.8	2.7	0	64.8	114.5
2014	April	76.1	0.2	1.15	44.6	77.45
2014	May	64.4	2	0.3	33.1	66.7
2014	June	63.5	1.4	0.1	42.1	65
2014	July	45.7	1.8	0.7	32.5	48.2
2014	August	99.9	0.6	0.1	48.7	100.6
2014	September	67.2	1.8	0	36.2	69
2014	October	92.1	1.3	0	45.8	93.4
2014	November	75.6	2.7	0.1	41.8	78.4
2014	December	135.32	0.2	0.7	84.32	136.22
2015	January	170.8	2.6	0.2	91.97	173.6
2015	February	156.37	1.1	0.8	96.95	158.27
2015	March	121.99	1.2	0.7	69.86	123.89
2015	April	125.92	2.4	0.16	74.67	128.48
2015	May	125.57	3.8	1	73.46	130.37
2015	June	94.2	5.9	0.1	57.6	100.2

Club Trips and social events

Member and social events have continued to be a success over the last year. There has been a noticeable increase in interest from members wanting to get involved in fly-aways and other social events which is great to see. The arrival of Simsy and the enthusiastic instructing team we have has seen a big improvement in the club 'vibe'.

Fly-aways

We managed to get in some fly-aways including a few local trips to Masterton and Omaka. Unfortunately some of the other trips planned to places such as D'Urville Island and Lake Station had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

Members were given the opportunity to complete a strip flying course which was run by Marlborough Aero Club, this involved heading away for a weekend in Omaka to be taught the ins-and-outs of strip flying.

Other social events held included:

- Our regular monthly drinks at the Spruce Goose which are still proving popular
- A Pilot Information Evening held in May last year, great feedback was received from this and subsequently another one was held just recently, this is something we will continue to organise.
- In November we had a successful working bee in which many members and instructors roll up their sleeves' to help tidy the place up a bit. It was a great effort by everyone involved and the club rooms looked fantastic afterwards! It's great to see so many members taking pride in the presentation of the club rooms.
- Weekend BBQs for members and families, taking advantage of the lovely summer weather we had
- Our annual presentation dinner was a fantastic success with many deserving members taking away trophies for their successes and efforts over the year.

As a way to increase awareness of the aero club we arranged a stand up at the Wings over Wairarapa air show in Masterton in January, with MBG on display. We had a rotating shift of members looking after the stand over the three day event. A great team effort!

To help with member engagement at the club we implemented a Duty Pilot roster over the summer months, with members volunteering to work on the front desk, to help alleviate the admin work the instructors need to do between flights. This was a big help on busy days. Thanks to all who helped out!

Website / Social Media

We renewed and refreshed our website which now includes the ability for people to buy vouchers online rather than having to phone, email or visit the club. This has had immediate benefits in the number of vouchers being bought. Bronnie and Amy did the 'hard-yards' to get the new site set up. We have also starting utilising the blog on our website to post updates from the executive and CFI rather than the previous production of the Windsock newsletter, so hopefully people are finding it easier and more up to date.

Advertising and Marketing

With a new website and electronic payments, together with a modern simple layout this should help us align with the online presence needed in the internet world. Thanks to our members, we also delivered flyers around local suburbs before Christmas, this certainly increased the number of vouchers and trial flights sold. We have got involved with school visits again where possible. James & Richard organised a very successful school visit which included ground time with the students as well as completing a number of flights.

Governance and the Committee

What I have learnt over the last few years and particularly this last year as President is that running a Club is an enormous undertaking that requires a great deal of time and commitment. This applies to every single member of the Executive, all of whom juggle day jobs and families too.

In an ideal world, the role of the Executive would be that of a governing body, and the Club would have the resources to handle its day-to-day operational management.

Unfortunately, the reality is that it is not possible to have this governance/management separation. We have only two full time members of staff (who's job it is to fly), and 10 members of the Executive Committee. So we have to roll up our sleeves to get some things done. The Club is completely reliant on the input from the Executive members and support and effort from members.

The Club is incredibly fortunate to have the commitment of each member of the Executive, not to mention the incredible pool of talent.

It is of course important to remember that every single Executive member is a volunteer, which places a huge demand on their own time and goodwill and on behalf of the members, I'd like to thank the Executive for their tireless dedication.

I couldn't have asked for a better group of people to work with, and the one thing that has kept this Club together despite all the trials and tribulations is the unity of the Executive. This is a team who have worked together for the greater good of the Club.

I'd like to thank:

Amy Dreverman for her role as Club Captain. We are enormously grateful for the production of the Windssocks throughout the year, and organising all the Club activities. Amy also kindly took on the Treasurer function and is now standing for President Elect. Amy is a stalwart of the club, sorting out events such as the Masterton air show which including driving over the day before to get kit there, managing the duty roster and getting kit back again. She is always prepared to go the extra distance every time and could list so many examples.

Andrew Braddick, our Secretary, who is the most organised person I have ever met. Andrew played a key role in the interview and recruitment process for the CFI and other instructors, meeting up with Nico to improve engagement between us and made a large contribution to the draft strategy that will be presented tonight. Andrew's very sensible and pragmatic approach helps keep a calm, reasoned discussion going under all circumstances.

Malcolm Goddard for heading up our debt management unit.

Simon Holdsworth for consistently being involved, trying out new planes in the US and now the incoming WAC President.

Rodney for his ever enthusiastic contribution and in pulling together hanger space priority criteria.

And a special thank you to the executive members who have decided to step down this year and not seek re-election:

Nick C Jnr for taking the lead in our pre-Christmas marketing efforts.

Charles Davis for his always insightful contribution and support with the interview and recruitment process.

Grant Connell for being the man around the house to get things fixed.

Andrew Coy as always put across sensible and clear views to make sure all considerations were accounted for. He has been away quite a bit with his business expanding across the globe, a lot of flying but not really the sort we all enjoy! We are doing our best to get Andrew into the Nanchang syndicate.

Conclusion

The club is in a much better place now. We have a great team on board with a lot of experience and a hugely positive approach.

But.... there are some truths which the Club has learnt to always live by:

It's a tough commercial environment we operate in, and we can't just rely on the convenience of our location to bring in the business. Location may get us potential business, but it is the overall value proposition the Club offers that allows us to keep the business, and it is what makes people want to open their wallets - for what is ultimately an expensive activity.

So now.... without the burden of month by month financial strain, in our leaner, more efficient form - the Club is able to focus on improving things like:

- The presentation of its facilities – now a big focus
- The quality of its aircraft fleet –upgrades are progressing

All of which goes a long way towards the overall customer experience and better perceived value for money and ultimately retention of people wanting to fly and people wanting to be members of this Club.

This time last year when I became President, I set the following goals before you at my incoming President's speech:

1. Getting a new CFI on board, while improving the maintenance, flying process and procedures – achieved
2. Get a marketing plan in place & more members – achieved

3. Consistent engagement with aircraft owners with emphasis on main fleet provider – achieved
4. Plan for club facilities longer term - making progress with an offer from WIAL, a meeting & conversations. We have to work within their time line.
5. IFR training underway – achieved although within the limitations of aircraft and available instructing
6. Getting the club back in black (noting we were in the black at the start of Presidential term but with the membership fee buffer already used up) – not quite achieved
7. Update to the business plan for next five years (added onto agenda later in the year) – draft being presented tonight

I look forward to my continued involvement and being able to offer my assistance and my experience to the new Executive as I now move into the role of Immediate Past President, though knowing it is an experienced executive with good continuity and new people coming on board. I now hand over the President's gavel to Simon Holdsworth - who I am sure will serve as a committed and dedicated President to the Club over the coming year.

Derrick Westenra
President
22 July 2015