

MODEL AERONAUTICAL
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Newsletter

NO.4/1998

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31st August 1998 - From the Federal Secretary

Insurance Excess

In Newsletter 4/1998, mention was made of a postal vote to determine how much of the excess on property damage claims should be paid by the MAAA. A majority of State/Territory Associations decided that it would pay the excess between \$250.00 and \$1000.00; the member remaining responsible for the first \$250.00.

In the case of club-approved instructors, a long standing recommendation has been that the club pay the excess on their behalf on a claim arising from an incident during instruction. If someone is instructing but not as a club-designated instructor, he/she should reach an agreement with the student before instruction starts on the way any excess will be paid.

There has been yet another incident in which a car has been damaged. The cost of repair has not yet been quoted.

CARs Part 101

The proposed CAR Part 101 that was mentioned in Newsletter 4/98 has been issued as forecast as a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) 9806. A copy was sent to all State and Territory Associations. Comments/recommendations have been received from some. It is difficult to discuss the NPRM in detail when most MAAA members will not have seen a copy. However, suffice it to say that clarification of the "30 metre" rule has been requested as well the deletion of a requirement that models flown outside of approved

areas be operated "clear of towns, cities and populous areas". A minimum weight for "small" models has been recommended to avoid bringing children's toys under the regulation. CASA would not consider increasing the maximum weight of the "small" model to 10 kg on the basis that to do so would affect the height limits proposed in the draft.

It is impossible to know how long CASA will take to respond to the comments submitted on NPRM 9806. There have been eight NPRMs on proposed CAR Parts issued so far this year. I do not want to repeat the confusion that arose on R/C Frequencies when a number of changes were made and were reported; until the content of Part 101 is finalised, specific detail will not be given although it will be less restrictive than the current CAO 95-21. If you do want to see just what was proposed, the NPRM can be downloaded from <http://www.casa.gov.au> or I can send you a photocopy on request. Please remember that it is a draft. It is almost certain that other sport aviation bodies and perhaps pilots of light aircraft submitted comment.

CAR Part 149

Another NPRM - 9805 - was issued on a proposed CAR Part 149 on "Aviation Administration Organisations". Because there is some mis-information on the proposed Part, I will give some detail.

As background, the then MAAA President - Ron Ericson - and I attended a meeting chaired by the CASA Board Chairman - Dick Smith - in Canberra. Also present were representatives from the other sport aviation bodies - parachuting, ballooning, gliding, hang gliding etc. Smith told us that too much of the CASA budget was being spent on supervision of sport aviation activities. He intended to re-direct that supervision to fare-carrying passenger airlines and charter operations.

To do this, the existing sport aviation bodies were to be tasked with supervision of various aspects of their sport (licencing, inspection and registration of aircraft etc) as an "Aviation Administration Organisation" subject to their meeting specified requirements. At that time, Smith stated that he would prefer that only one body administer any one sport aviation discipline; in fact, he asked the representatives at the meeting of the three organisations for parachuting to amalgamate.

Also, as background, most of the sport aviation organisations, but not the MAAA, received some CASA funding towards the cost of supervision already carried out on behalf of CASA.

When the NPRM was issued, it proposed that more than one organisation would be approved to administer a sport and further, there would be no CASA funding for the supervisory activity. As a consequence, the Australian Sport Aviation Confederation (ASAC) recommended revision of the draft CAR 149 to permit only one association to

administer any one discipline, pointing out among other things that otherwise a disciplined or disgruntled member could quit one organisation and join another to the possible detriment of safe operating standards. It also asked for the re-instatement of previous funding.

While supporting the ASAC position, the MAAA made it clear that it should not be required to carry out supervisory functions it does not already have and that supervision should not be required unless there was a justifiable reason, determined by risk analysis, for it.

I have heard reports of people speculating that it could cost up to \$500.00 to have a large model inspected. I know of no basis for their speculation.

Because of the ASAC opposition, I expect that there will be further negotiation on the NPRM.

R/C Frequencies

Under a class licence, two frequency bands are specifically approved for the operation of R/C models in Australia - 29 MHz and 36 MHz. There is another class licence for "Low Interference Potential Devices" which permits operation on the 27 MHz and 40 MHz bands for Industrial, Scientific and Medical (ISM) purposes. In the late 1940s, operation of R/C equipment was first permitted on these bands. The importation and sale of "Citizens Band Equipment" on 27 MHz made the continued operation of R/C equipment on that band unsafe. However, the 40 MHz band remained available and was used. A few years ago, because of the increasing use of the band for ISM purposes and the consequent increased possibility of interference, the MAAA R/C Frequency Subcommittee recommended that its use be phased out.. Although adopted, this recommendation was later overturned - there were just too many 40 MHz sets being used - subject to the operator being alert to the possibility of interference from other users. The class licence does not offer protection from interference; further, there is no maximum bandwidth stated as is the case for 27, 29 and 36 MHz equipment.

The Class Licence has recently been revised to open out the frequency band from 40.66 - 40.70 to 40.66 - 41.00. This would permit the operation of 40 MHz equipment on more spots than are currently available. The major factor against the use of the extra spots is the probability of interference from other users of the band. Only demand for more spectrum would have justified the extension. A minor consideration would be the need to modify the frequency control boards. The 40 MHz band in some countries is restricted to the radio control of surface vehicles. I do not know if the equipment is consequently built to a lower standard specification.

The R/C Frequency Subcommittee has been tasked with recommending on the use of the additional bands. Until it reports and the MAAA Council determines its policy, it would be prudent not buy equipment on the newly available spots, especially from overseas. You could find that your club will not permit its use.

World Championships.

As far as Australian participation is concerned, the 1998 World Championships have ended. David Hobby, a member of the R/C Electric Pylon Racing team did very well gaining 7th place in a field of 26. Max Kroger, flying in R/C Glider (Class F3J) was unlucky not to have made the flyoff. He lost his model in one round scoring a zero. Unfortunately, the performance of other team members and teams demonstrate the effect of our isolation from international class competition although it must be said that the winning time in C/L Team Race has been flown in Australia.

World Championship Trials

Because of problems experienced in selecting events to be trials for the 1999 series of World Championships, the ways that teams are selected are being reviewed. Nearly every class of championships has its own version of trials. Free Flight uses just one central trial. Selection for a Control Line team uses results from a Nationals and two State Championships. The Scale team selection is based solely on the results of Nationals. For pylon, selection is based on the two best results achieved at a Nationals, home state championships and the AMPRA championships.

Recommendations have been sought from interested parties. These will be put to a special subcommittee for its recommendations to the 1999 Council conference.

MAAA Management

The subject of MAAA Management was recently mentioned in a State Association Newsletter. You might remember that it was considered by a Working Group appointed by the 1997 Council conference. A special Council conference in October last year approved the necessary changes to the Association's Rules and By-laws. The new management system was introduced at the 1998 Council meeting. After only six months, it seems a little early to express an opinion on the success or failure of the new structure.

You might remember that the new Executive has the President in NSW, the Vice President in Queensland and the Technical Secretary and Secretary/Treasurer in Victoria. All meetings held to date have been by teleconference with day-to-day business conducted by telephone (not often), fax and e-mail. E-mail allowed the President to be involved in Association business even while absent in Italy for his work.