

**MODEL AERONAUTICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.**  
**N e w s l e t t e r**  
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October 1999 - From the Federal Secretary

#### Airspace

The September 1999 issue of Asia-Pacific Air Safety, a publication of the Australian Bureau of Air Safety has the following report: "I was flying south over the local radio model aircraft society, passing through 1500 ft on descent. I sighted a radio controlled glider at the same level and 20m to my left. This is the third time I have seen these models at this level or higher in this location. The club should be reminded of height restrictions."

I was not able to find out which club was involved, despite asking. The MAAA and its members should be concerned about reports such as this being published.

I again remind you that, under Civil Aviation Order 95-21, our models are limited to 300 feet above ground level unless specific approval to operate at a greater height has been given by a responsible officer of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority.

Sufficient copies of the Manual of Procedures, which contains CAO 95-21, have been sent to all State/Territory Associations to allow two copies to be sent to each club. These should not be filed by the Club Secretary but posted in the club room for all to read.

National Sport Aviation Centre

As far as aeromodelling is concerned, the National Sport Aviation Centre at Wangaratta, the venue for Aeromodelling World Championships in 1991 and 1994, is no longer a possible venue for competitions. The City of Wangaratta would not renew the lease on the terminal building and has advised that authorisation to fly model aircraft on the airfield will no longer be given.

#### Mobile Telephones..

The frequency sub committee has reviewed the use of mobile phones at radio control model flying fields. It should be noted that a 1995 recommendation was that high power phones with an add-on amplifier should not be used within 30 metres of operating aircraft. That recommendation still stands

The MAAA now recommends that mobile phones be banned at radio model flying fields in the following locations: -

- The transmitter pound
- The pit area
- The flight line

#### Notes.

1. The reason for this recommendation is the possibility of interference from the radiated signal of the mobile phone corrupting a model transmitter radiated signal or the memory of computer radios.
2. Consistent with the intent of this recommendation, a buffer zone should exist between an allowed mobile phone area and a model transmitter. It is suggested that the minimum distance should be 2 metres

The reasons for this recommendation can be consolidated and summarised as follows:-

Mobile phones are in widespread use and their use should not be unreasonably restricted. They also enable emergency communication both to modellers who are flying and in the event of problem at the field. However there are reports of interference with both the radio transmission and the memory of computer radios

Due to the nature of interference, and the fact that is possible in theory, it is almost impossible to prove that it will not occur with every combination of transmitter type and frequency. Nevertheless the interference probability drops with the square of the separation between the source of the interference and the model radio. In the event of interference with an operating transmitter the model is likely to be lost with the financial loss to the owner and the possibility of third party damage. This problem would most likely occur on the flight line. In the event of memory corruption, depending on the severity, it is not certain that the owner would necessarily detect this during a normal pre-flight test, not withstanding to effort to reprogram and the

uncertainty as to the integrity of the transmitter afterwards. The transmitter pound and the pit area are the most likely areas where this could occur.

The recommended restrictions significantly reduce the risks whilst at the same time enabling mobile phones to be operated in car park areas and the public viewing area if this is separate from the pits area. It should be noted that some clubs have gone further than this and require that mobile phones be switched off once through the gate at the entry to the field. That is within the power of individual clubs.

#### Sport and the Law.

Two States – NSW and Victoria – are introducing legislation that could affect affiliated clubs. That in NSW is aimed at protecting children. The Act defines “child related employment” as employment that involves direct unsupervised contact with a person under 18 years of age. Those clubs instructing children will have to require an instructor or potential instructor to disclose whether or not he/she is a prohibited person. A prohibited person is defined as someone convicted of a serious sex offence; he/she may not be employed. Failure to comply with this obligation will make the club liable, if incorporated to a penalty of \$2000.00 or \$1000.00 if not incorporated. Further, it could soon be required that volunteers working with children be screened. Anyone working with children and who is paid will have to be screened. The NSW Minister is to publish guidelines on screening. The NSW Commissioner is to be notified if the finding of the screening is adverse.

The Victorian legislation concerns the protection of personal information and data. It might well require, that when joining a club, a person consents to his personal information being transmitted to the State and National bodies.

Further information in the form of a “Sports Update” issued by a firm of Melbourne lawyers can be obtained on request to the Secretary. State/Territory Associations also have a copy of the relevant “Sports Update”

#### 53<sup>rd</sup> Nationals

Entry forms and programmes for the 53<sup>rd</sup> Nationals will NOT be published in any of the Australian aeromodelling magazines. They will be published in the Newsletter of your State/Territory association. It is probable that:

- No late entries will be accepted;
- Team entries will be required in all C/L and R/C racing events (this will be the subject of review by the MAAA Council in February); and
- A minimum of ten entries will be required in all R/C events.

The organising committee has agreed to a request by the Doonside Aeromodelling Club to include, as an unofficial C/L event, the “Miss Kath O’Sullivan Prize” The event, to

be flown on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, will be a team race using the Model Aircraft’s, Max Cumming design “Mills Mite”. At least one of the team must be aged under thirteen as at the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2000. Kits complete with Cox motor except for dope and glue can be obtained from PO Box 11 Doonside for \$40.00 post free. Further information can be obtained from the same address.

#### Reconnaissance Model Aircraft

A recent issue of a nationally-distributed mail order catalogue carried an advertisement for a radio controlled, camera-carrying, model aircraft. The accompanying text invited the purchaser to fly the model over his neighbourhood etc taking photographs, describing the operation as simple. As a consequence, I received copies from Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Western Australia. Perhaps because the catalogue was first distributed in NSW, RCAS[NSW] received early advice and indeed it contacted the distributor even before I was made aware of the advert. The distributor and CASA were both contacted about the advert. I believe future adverts will include advice that permission to operate the model is necessary.

As was demonstrated in the 1970s, it is generally not illegal to sell equipment that is itself illegal to operate. One of Australia’s multi-millionaires made his money doing just that. It is the operation of the aircraft as suggested that would be illegal

#### 2000 MAAA Council Conference

The MAAA Council conference will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February at the Ford Training Centre. At the time of writing, only two or three items have been received for the agenda. One item will be the election of the MAAA President and Technical Secretary. The present incumbents are serving an initial two year term. Whoever is elected next February will serve three years. The closing date for nominations is the 14<sup>th</sup> December and can be made and seconded by affiliate members. The person nominated must accept the nomination in writing. There is no restriction on the place of residence which can be anywhere in Australia.

The VMAA is arranging for the Sports lawyers already mentioned to give a presentation at the Ford Training Centre on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> February. There is an open invitation to attend. Topics are likely to include:

- Director and Committee Member Responsibilities;
- Insurance Requirements for Sporting Clubs;
- Harrassment in Sport; and
- Privacy Legislation.