

MAAA President's report – May 2025

This conference marks the end of my first year as MAAA President. During this time, there has been a degree of change - predominantly to increase organisational efficiency, reduce administrative burden on our clubs and states, and contain costs.

On an organisational front, we have internalised the Member Services function, with that role now being performed internally by the Federal Secretary.

From a fiduciary perspective, the organisation has maintained a tight stance on costs, with most expense lines in the budget coming in at, or below expected levels. The outsourced storage of MAAA records and property has now moved to a secure facility in Melbourne at no cost to the MAAA. We have also experienced strong investment returns from our cash reserves which continue to be invested in interest bearing accounts with a big four Australian bank. An environment of reducing interest rates will lessen these returns over the coming few years, nevertheless, interest earned on these deposits remains a good source of income to the Association.

The proposed membership system project has become a disappointment. We have incurred costs in excess of \$80,000 over the last 4 years and not achieved an outcome, and apparently we are unlikely to. Like a lot of IT projects in my work life, aspirational goals of perceived functionality needs and cool phone based apps fails to meet the organisation's needs for cost effective and functional effectiveness. Nevertheless, I'd like to acknowledge the substantial efforts of those who have worked in an attempt to get the project off the ground. Our current membership business model seems somewhat unique, and we are faced with the reality that we need to continue with a bespoke system with all the associated risks, or change our business model to adopt what seems to be a common practice of single layer club membership – be it aeromodelling or any other community-based membership system.

The largest achievement this year has been the Area Approval project with CASA. This has consumed a large amount of my time as we negotiated the outcome with CASA representatives, and I'm pleased with the outcome. There is real work to be done at the Federal Office to complete our internal systems, although once established, the process will be much easier than in the past for everyone involved, particularly our clubs and state associations. This outcome has also had the result of improving the depth and breadth of our relationship with CASA at all levels within that organisation.

I'd like to formally acknowledge the contribution of Rhyll as our Federal Secretary, who works tirelessly to support the executive, and the rest of the MAAA Executive who work constantly to preserve, maintain and support the Association.

Carl Bizon

MAAA President