



New South Wales Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association Inc.

President's Report
September 2021-2022 Year

John Harriott
On behalf of NSWHPA Committee of Management ("CoM")

Overview

Thank you everybody and I would like to declare the 2022 AGM open.

As a matter of formality we can confirm that the minutes from the 2021 AGM were confirmed as a true and accurate record by the serving committee.

The last 12 months was a better flying year after the impact of the pandemic and many of us experienced a return to our home in the skies.

As of early June 2022 our membership was 1057 men 73 females total of 1130.

	FULL-MEMBERS		TOTAL	STUDENT-MEMBERS		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE		MALE	FEMALE	
2018			1074			
2019	996	55	1051	135	26	161
2020	928	52	980	102	23	125
2021	1012	58	1070	129	26	155
2022-at-27-May-22	1057	73	1130			

Of interest is the makeup of our population comprising 261 HG, 869 PG and interestingly 153 PPG pilots.

Today's update from SAFA reports an increase to 1197 pilots including 79 woman.

A significant proportion of our members are early to late stage intermediate pilots and this realization has directed significant investment in pilot skills, sites, endorsements, equipment, refresher clinics and planned events.

Club focus

The NSWHPA in this last year continued to focus on providing support through clubs.

This is because

- Clubs are lifeblood of the sport
- Act as custodians of sites
- Are the key responsible body for landowners and authorities to engage with

- Welcome, retain and develop local pilots
- Work closely with the instructor community
- Initiate and embrace projects
- Leverage NSWHPA effort
- Source of succession planning

The support provided by the NSWHPA is designed to flex with the needs of individual clubs as their management changes.

Key audiences

The NSWHPA is focused on driving safety and growth in the sport and initiates, delivers and invests in projects with three audiences in mind:

1. Retention of existing pilots
2. Re-engagement with inactive pilots
3. Attraction of new entrants into the sport

Emphasis and success in these areas leads to benefits to two other audiences who are essential to keeping the sport alive:

- The instructor community
- Equipment manufacturers and local distributors

Enablers

To meet its goals the NSWHPA has established a number of mechanisms including:

- Sub Committee of Club liaison officers to ensure each club has a direct contact for two way communication flow
- Documented funding guidelines designed to deliver financial support via Clubs and event organisers to identified audiences
- Management support, landowner packs and financial reimbursement to Clubs to ensure site retention arrangements with landowners
- Collated body of documentation representing best practice in reaching agreement with private landowners, Councils, National Parks, State Water, State Forests and governing Territories
- A dedicated SAFA liaison officer who sits on the SAFA Committee

- A female pilot subcommittee and strategic alliance with Women with Wings
- A dedicated Grants officer to deliver ongoing liaison and relationship management with the NSW Office of Sport

Funding

Financially the NSWHPA has continued its strong year on year performance and has improved its robust position due to judicious financial management, growing membership numbers, the encouragement of co-operative financing agreements with Clubs on projects and continued success in attracting a variety of Government grants to promote our activities.

The quality of our financial reporting continues to improve and I would like to recognise Julian Belmonte for his assistance and Matt Haes our Treasurer for the professionalism and rigor that he brings to the role. Matt will provide the Treasurers Report this evening.

My high level comments are:

- NSW resident pilots who are SAFA financial in 2021 contributed \$50 annually to the NSWHPA via the Regional Sports Development Levy when they renewed with SAFA.
- For the third year running the NSWHPA CoM took the decision to not increase this levy in recognition of the impact of COVID-19 on flying time and personal finances
- To supplement this income the NSWHPA has during the last seven years developed an increasingly strong relationship and CoM Grant application expertise with the NSW Office of Sport and this has resulted in significant success in winning funding for specific purposes.
- Led since 2021 by Jude de Groot, the inflow of these funds has enabled the NSWHPA to year after year spend significantly more money to drive initiatives and support the NSW flying community than is contributed by the pilots themselves from the Regional Levy.
- I do thank the Office of Sport, Jude, the female subcommittee and the volunteers of the CoM for their significant efforts in grant application

and the required acquittal reporting of the use of these funds after project completion.

Key activities in the year

Marketing

During the year Tim Sabre joined the NSWHPA Committee and under his leadership significant gains have been made in our marketing activity. These include an extensive social media presence on Facebook and Instagram and proactive and regular communication to inactive and current members and the public. This has attracted significant engagement by pilots, media interest from the ABC and SMH and meeting request from State Government and Shadow Ministers.

Months in the planning, the new NSWHPA website has recently been launched and includes the representation of many of our NSW clubs. The site presents our love of the sport and how new entrants can engage in a highly professional manner.

NSWHPA Female Pilot Initiative Subcommittee

The NSWHPA is committed to supporting female pilots in sports aviation. The strategic alliance with Women with Wings has to date and will continue to deliver opportunities for engagement by women and we will have more detail later this evening. Thanks to Natalia Huber and Catherine McMillan who served on the Committee and for the tireless support provided by Kaz Waller and Jude de Groot.

Future of Flight Conference

A key event during the year was hosting the first ever Future of Flight Conference. This June weekend event brought together executives from the majority of clubs throughout NSW to discuss the future of our sport.

Fully funded by a COVID recovery grant, the objectives were to improve communications between the clubs themselves, with the NSWHPA, deliver professional development, agree on key objectives, investment criteria and allocate in principle funding support to high priority projects.

The event was highly acclaimed by all attendees and the 4 key agreed priorities were:

Secure our sites

- Universal agreement that formally securing and improving sites is the highest priority and the best thing we can do to serve the audiences of retaining existing pilots, re-engaging inactive pilots and attracting new entrants.

CFI shortage, empowering Senior pilots, training Duty/Safety pilots

- Acknowledged that a key bottleneck to delivering safety and growth is the shortage of instructors and emerging site management challenge in catering for low airtime pilots

Safety

- Confirmation that safety increases due to site investment, delegation of authority and training

Grow the Sport – especially HG

- Identified suite of actions and funding opportunities

To deliver on these priorities a number of key projects for funding support subject to the club based volunteer sponsors developing business cases for review were approved in principle.

These ranged from short term investment in PG/HG ground tow capability and training throughout NSW to significant site upgrades, event support, and site access agreements with an estimate range of \$100,000 to \$197,000.

Special thanks and recognition to the club members who have volunteered to champion many of these projects on behalf of their fellow NSW pilots. As always volunteers are our scarcest resource and without them projects simply don't happen.

Sample of other activity during the year

- 2022 saw significantly increased investment in sites, competitions and individual pilot development
- New sites and LZ s have been negotiated in the Hunter valley and Illawarra
- Strong take up of the heavily subsidised refresher clinics to get dormant pilots current again
- Planned rollout of porosity meters/tow kit to club groupings
- Committed investment in hang gliding simulator equipment to attract new pilots
- Active participation and support of the Pico motorised community
- Commitment to and development of winch agreements and capability building
- Continued support for the weather station network at Club sites throughout NSW
- Support for the Ausrasp forecasting platform for higher resolution at key sites
- Funding for free flight film festivals
- Grant funds received for HSHW / WWW Partnership of \$50k, Sports Recovery '21 Grant of \$33k, Grassroots grant of \$15k
- Shared funding for ACT Lake George lease
- Competition support
- Fly Everest support
- Defib donation to Victorian HG Comps team

Governance

The NSWHPA is accountable to SAFA, the Dept of Fair Trading and members for operational and financial reporting. In addition, the Office of Sport requires stringent reporting and the existence of key policies as a condition of considering and extending Grants.

The NSWHPA website provides public access to Policies, Guidelines, Constitution, Business Plan, AGM minutes and contact information.

Culture

At a cultural level the members of the NSWHPA CoM have embraced responsiveness as a key goal. Benefits include:

- Typically by email majority voting the CoM will acknowledge/approve Club requests that meet existing published Guidelines within a 24-48 hour period. This removes delays for clubs and payment occurs in most cases within 48 hours of approval
- Formal monthly meeting by the NSWHPA CoM can then focus on strategic matters rather than transactional and this in turn typically reduces the length of the meetings and impact on volunteer time

Conclusion

The outgoing Committee extends its appreciation to the hard working Executives of the Clubs, the commercial operators, equipment suppliers and Competition Directors for all that they do for our sport.

A formal thank you to SAFA and to the Office of Sport and the Hon Natalie Ward Minister for Sport for their endorsement and trust.

I would like to thank the NSWHPA Committee members who gave so much during the year - it has been an honor and a privilege to work with you.

Philip de la Hunty, Michael Stott, Judith de Groot, Catherine McMillan, Tim Sabre, Matt Te Hira, Ralf Gittfried, Matt Haes, Julian Belmonte – thank you for all that you do.

Particular thanks to Matt Te Hira for his enduring support of our clubs and to Judith our Grants Champion who are stepping down this year.

A very special thank you to Bill Moyes for being here and a special 90th birthday wish from all of the pilots in person tonight, those attending via Zoom nsw and australia and in fact lovers of free flight throughout the world for many years.

We encourage all clubs to discuss your ideas and initiatives with your NSWHPA liaison officer -funds and management support are available for investments that encourage safer flying and more of us doing it.

Safe flying and see you at launch.

John Harriott

President

NSWHPA