



CASA's CEO: Pip Spence

Six months into the job as the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's (CASA's) new CEO and Director of Aviation Safety, *RAAA News* asked Pip Spence whether the top job differed from her expectations before taking up the role.

'As a deputy secretary at the Department, I had a very good understanding of CASA's focus on finalising the regulatory reforms with the implementation of the flight ops regulations and also knew that it was moving to the new national model.

'I now have a deeper appreciation of the complexity of the regulatory environment, and the need to weigh up different views on issues.

'One of the things you don't know until you're sitting in the chair is just how much change CASA staff and the aviation community are going through, and how much pressure that change puts on everyone.'

The significance of all this happening during a pandemic really hit home, Spence says.

For RAAA members, who will be particularly affected by the 2 December flight ops regulations, Spence strongly encourages them to make contact. 'If there are issues which don't make sense, please reach out. We very much regard 2 December as the start of the transition and want to work with RAAA members as they implement the new rules.'

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Professor Doug Drury, head of Central Queensland University's aviation school, talks to *RAAA News* about the university's training plans.

From the chairman



Malcolm Sharp
RAAA Chair
CEO, Sharp Airlines

This time last year, in my speech on being elected chairman, I said that COVID was behind us. Well, 2021 proved me soundly wrong, so I hope I'm right this year, and that despite COVID being the gift that keeps on giving, regional aviation is in a much better position in 2022, as borders open up, with a strong rate of vaccination across the country. We have a 99 per cent vaccination rate within the company, and in the coming months, getting boosters will be important to continue the nationwide momentum.

I thank members too, for their continuing confidence in re-electing me to chair the organisation as we head into the (hopefully) post-COVID new year. Although the pandemic has been costly in many ways, not the least of which is the cost of masks, disinfectants, and now the requirement for some operators to provide rapid antigen testing, members' feedback at the Xmas functions I attended is that the economy is in reasonable shape. The extension of the Regional Airline Network Support (RANS) program, which runs out on 31 March, 2022, has also been a big plus for regional operators.

Next year, we will make the industry skills shortage a major focus

building on the themes of the skills webinar we held in November. The big one is the shortage of engineers. Currently, the pilot situation is not too bad, although that could change in three to five years' time. We must find ways we can accelerate the uptake of people wanting to be aircraft engineers. At the moment, admittedly, that's a hard sell; aviation's been through tough times, and job security is not assured. What we've done in the past hasn't worked. We have to face the challenges as an industry, so next year I'll be talking to partners, training organisations and industry: we know what the problems are, that's the easy bit. Finding a solution is going to be more difficult. But tackling a huge problem like this is like the answer to that question 'how do you eat an elephant?' One bite at a time.

In 2022, we'll also be working on behalf of members as CASA rolls out the new flight ops regs, advocating for members who may be encountering difficulties in negotiating the new regs. I know it's taken a lot of time getting them out in our organisation, and we will be trying to get clarity on some areas of concern to members. For us, the new regulations have meant both a lot more flexibility in our operation, but at the same time, it's made things more complex, as we have to work out what compliance path works best in each situation – there's no longer that simple prescriptive approach.

I wish you all a happy festive season, and a successful new year. With any luck you will have the chance for some time out after a pretty challenging two years,

Stay safe, Mal

2022 Aviation events

RAAA Events

Roadshows (four, dates to be confirmed)

April

Perth

June

Darwin

September

Cairns

November

Toowoomba

www.raaa.com.au

Other aviation events

Safeskies 2022

Conference Canberra

20-22 September

www.safeskiesaustralia.org

2023 Aviation events

Avalon International Airshow and Aerospace & Defence Exposition

28 February-5 March

www.airshow.com.au/airshow2023/index.asp

From the CEO



Steve Campbell
RAAA CEO

It was great to catch up with many of you at our Christmas functions, although maybe not so great for my liver—with COVID, I’m out of match practice! The Christmas drinks were a great way to have members engage again after our socially-distanced two years. A big thank you to our sponsors for the events: Cobham in Perth, Alliance in Brisbane, and for the final one, Omni Executive in Canberra. Sydney Seaplanes also extended the bar tab in Sydney. The final event in Canberra saw an amazing turnout of agency principals and local members.

At the time of writing, the Government’s ‘Future of Aviation’ paper was due to be released, outlining six strategies for the future, so it will be interesting to see the detail of what’s in it. The Government has also committed funds to an aviation recovery framework, including \$33 million to support ADS-B, with an up to \$5000 rebate; regional and remote support will continue; and \$4 million for women in aviation.



Photo The Canberra Xmas function. Supplied.



Photo Presenting at the CAPA session on regional aviation.

We are looking forward to renewing the momentum of our roadshow series, and are planning on holding four next year, with tentative dates and locations being: Perth in the first week of April, followed by Darwin in late June, Cairns in September, and Toowoomba in November. Given the success of our first two in Mildura and Dubbo, we are looking forward to kicking them off again, and I hope to see as many of you as possible as we move around the country. Borders permitting, I’m also planning to travel more widely to meet with members, get a better understanding of your operations, and discuss your issues. There’s nothing like getting that up-close-and-personal perspective.

Watch this space too, for an announcement next year about something big for regional aviation at the Avalon Airshow in 2023.

All the best for the festive season, and may 2022 be a successful year for you all,

Until then, Steve

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Photo | CASA CEO: Pip Spence. Supplied.

CASA CEO: Pip Spence ...cont.

The other piece of the jigsaw we need to give clarity about,' she says, 'is the maintenance side of things. We can't just say "they're two years off ... there's time", because people are making investments now—they need to know what the new world will look like.'

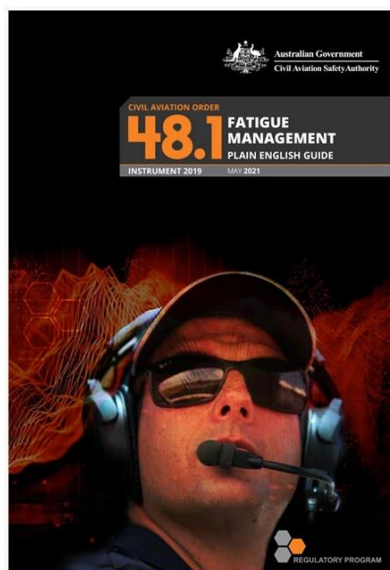
'One of the lessons learned from the flight ops regs is how we can use the plain English guides more effectively; the product has to be fit-for-purpose, so we are looking at more work on those.'

Reviewing the implementation of Part 61 will also be a focus in the coming year, Spence says, and CASA will work with industry members of the technical working group on resolving identified issues.

'I'm also very conscious of the GA front. I'm keen to have a GA work program that we can report on transparently, as I think sometimes, we're not good at telling people about the work we're doing.'

Another big focus for 2022 will be airspace, and particularly on the smaller airports where GA training and RPT intersect.

Given the change fatigue evident in both staff and industry, she says, 'We need to acknowledge that industry has been through a very disruptive period, but we'll never have change entirely behind us. Maybe we need to stop talking about change and think more about the need for continuous improvement.'



Reframing the discussion in this way recognises that as aviation inevitably continues to evolve, with the introduction of new technologies, and changes in the community and social landscape. And that means regulations need to continue to evolve accordingly.

Given contemporary aviation developments, for example, urban air mobility and electric aircraft, there is a need for a fully integrated airspace system, Spence says. 'These technologies are now all in the realm of the possible, and we have to ask ourselves, "what are all the decisions we need to make along the way to make an integrated system work? What are our priorities for the next 12 months, five years, 10 years to make it happen?"'

'It's a really exciting time to be here, with the fast-growing and changing nature of this sector demanding fresh thinking, and I'm focused on working closely with the aviation community as we consider evolving safety and regulatory issues.'

RAAA Xmas functions

To celebrate the end of a challenging two years, and the fact that face-to-face gatherings were possible at last, the RAAA held a number of Christmas functions around the country. A big thank you to members who sponsored them: Cobham in Perth; Darwin, Air North; Cairns, Hawker Pacific; Brisbane, Alliance; Melbourne, Sharp Airlines; and Canberra, Omni Executive. In Sydney, Sydney Seaplanes extended the bar tab.

Feedback was very positive as the regional industry enjoyed the opportunity to network again with fellow members. Mal Sharp and Steve Campbell attended as many of the functions as possible, including the final event in Canberra. This was particularly well attended by the heads of the various aviation agencies, including Pip Spence from CASA.

(See article on p. 1 and 4 for more on Pip Spence)



Photo The Canberra Xmas function – Steve Campbell (l) and Mal Sharp (r) of the Omni Executive banner.

New board members for 2021–22

Two new board members were elected at the annual general meeting held virtually on 25 November, to replace retiring members, John Boag, Cobham and Dave Trevelyan, Basair. A big thank you to them both for the commitment and expertise they brought to the group.

The chairman and two vice-chairmen were re-elected:

- Mal Sharp - Sharp Airlines (Chairman)
- Lee Schofield - Alliance Airlines (Vice-Chairman)
- Mark Wardrop - Chartair/Air Link (Vice-Chairman)

In alphabetical order, the board members for 2021-22 are:

- *Claude Alviani - Cobham Aviation
 - +Greg Atkin - Viva Energy
 - +Daniel Bowden - Airnorth
 - +Jim Davis - Rex
 - +Neville Evans - Jet Aviation/Hawker Pacific
 - *Adrienne Fleming - Tristar Aviation
 - +Carl Jepsen - GAM Group
 - +Shane Lawrey - RFDS QLD
 - +Stuart Richter - Toll Aviation.
- (* New members)
(+ Re-elected)

We welcome the two newcomers to the board: Claude Alviani, of Cobham; and Adrienne Fleming, Tristar Aviation.



Claude Alviani, Cobham's new managing director, regional services, (as from October 2021) brings over 40 years of aviation experience to the board. He has been a defence force flying instructor, holds an ATPL, and has extensive experience in managing fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) and charter operations.



The second newcomer to the board is **Adrienne Fleming**, someone well-suited to assist the board in its ongoing focus on industry skills and training. Like Claude, she also has more than 30 years of aviation experience. She and husband Geoff founded their Melbourne-headquartered flying training school, Tristar Aviation, of which she is the head of operations, in 1993. She is a member of CASA's Aviation Safety Advisory Panel, sits on the board of the Professional Aviation Board of Certification, and was awarded an Order of Australia in 2016 for services to aviation.

Aviation IT

Tim Taylor, principal and founder of Aviation IT Services, says that aviation operators need aviation-focused IT services.

Taylor is a self-confessed aviation nerd, and enjoys tailoring solutions for aviation clients, as he says, ‘making what you want reality.’ Taylor has over 20 years’ experience in IT, working for companies around the world.

The company’s head office is in NZ, with offices in Australia and the Pacific.

Aviation IT Services provides the following solutions:

- Managed IT support
- Hardware/software procurement
- Email hosting with Microsoft 365 and G-Suite
- Compliance and document control solutions
- Mobile device management solutions
- Domain hosting
- Internet and voice

Aviation IT prides itself on its aviation understanding, and provide end-to-end solutions for industry, including document management solutions and auditing to ensure compliance.

They are in partnership with Comply365, one of the largest



Photo Gulfstream image courtesy of Aviation IT services

and most trusted global document control management and compliance software companies.

If you don’t have that understanding of aviation’s unique requirements, Taylor explains, then it can lead to costly mistakes. He quotes the example of an aviation company wanting to boost their wi-fi connectivity. Taylor was called in to repair the damage done to the mobile device management (MDM) system by a contractor without the necessary aviation background—16 hours of repair work, not to mention the repair damage in the Apple business.

With the increasing use of mobile devices of all kinds to support aviation—smartphones; tablet computers, especially iPads etc.—a robust MDM system is

vital to support these devices, ensure security, and maintain functionality and efficiency.

Aviation IT, for example, has set up secure, locked down iPads for airlines, using a mobile device management solution. If one of an operator’s mobile devices is stolen, or lost, it can be wiped remotely. The serial number is owned by the operator, and Apple security is alerted, so the data is safe.

Aviation IT is an authorised Apple reseller, and can also access Apple finance on behalf of clients.

Taylor offers a suite of IT services, tailored to clients’ requirements and budgets, which in an aviation theme are ‘economy, premium economy, business, first class, and VIP/business jet.



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Photo Central Queensland University main headquarters. Supplied.

CQU Aviation Training

Professor Doug Drury has been head of aviation at Central Queensland University (CQU) for six months, and signed up CQU as RAAA members. Drury joined CQU after an extensive career in aviation: in aviation academia at the University of South Australia, where he also completed his PhD entitled 'Controlled Flight into Emotional Terrain'. This examined the impact of sleep deprivation on emotional responses to perceived threats in high-risk environments. He also flew as a commercial and army pilot in the US.

RAAA News talked to Professor Drury about changes to CQU's aviation training. The aviation faculty at CQU is undergoing a transformation, with the flight school course stretched out to three years. 'We know our industry is about to change because of COVID-19 impacts,' he says, 'with a huge shortage of

pilots—the vertical growth is going to be enormous, so we're expecting our student numbers to grow as well.'

'We have a curriculum research committee, comprising representatives of various airlines. They are telling us that they need aviation graduates who are better problem solvers, more capable critical thinkers,' Drury explains. 'They know how to fly, but not a great deal about the industry; the relationship between airlines and airports, for example. And 'the regional airlines need pilots with a greater understanding of engineering, more aircraft knowledge and functions.'

Drury says the transition will take a couple of years. 'Future program students will do the CPL subjects in order, but in year 3, we'll set them up with an ATPL "frozen", in other words with the ATPL theory component.'

Throughout the course, there will be a much greater emphasis on human factors (HF), risk and safety.

'We hope to get students interested in how to improve the science of aviation, by researching topics of interest and presenting them to the class.'

'Students will also be exposed to a lot of problem-solving, and HF processes.'

'If you have a degree, it gets you in at the top of the queue – you're a proven commodity.'

Drury says CQU will work closely with their 19 flight providers across the country in the transition phase and beyond, recognising that they will have students of their own, and supporting them. 'We are planning open days, and will also go into high schools to encourage kids to take STEM courses, especially maths and physics.'

'We also have a 737 sim on campus, and will use that for more HF training as well.'

RAAA Member Services

Refreshed website

Early in the new year, we'll be launching a refreshed website designed to provide added value for members. It will include a members'-only forum, designed to allow members to share issues and have conversations in the privacy of their own forum.

It should be an especially useful communication channel to share experiences of implementing the new regs, and to pose questions to see how others have solved operational issues.

Member survey

A big thank you to those members who took the five minutes necessary to complete the independent survey of member satisfaction administered by Jeff House of Capital Thinking.

House has completed the report on the survey, the summary of which is as follows. The survey contained 19 questions relating to several key pre-selected focus areas, including:

- Member engagement
- Networking opportunities
- Event satisfaction
- Board and management
- The basis and value of membership.



Photo PC-12 flight over central Australia. Pilatus Aircraft LTD

The positives

- **All** respondents indicated they intended to renew their membership
- **77%** of respondents were either 'mostly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the RAAA's service to members
- **68%** of respondents believed the RAAA was either 'mostly effective' or 'very effective' at achieving positive results on behalf of its members
- More than **90%** of respondents indicated they were either 'mostly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall level of engagement of the RAAA with the membership.

The negatives

- **13.6%** of respondents believed the RAAA does not provide members with sufficient opportunities to support the activities of the organisation
- **13.6%** of respondents said that the RAAA does not provide them with sufficient opportunity to engage and network with other members and key stakeholders.

Room for improvement

- **32%** found the RAAA to be only slightly or moderately effective in achieving positive outcomes for its members
- **50.1%** found the RAAA to be only slightly or moderately effective at using social and other media platforms to support its objectives and activities.

Want to feature in the next RAAA News?

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