



CONVENTION 2024

19-21
MARCH

RACV ROYAL PINES RESORT, GOLD COAST, QUEENSLAND



**Connect
Contribute
Collaborate**

Little over a month left to book!

To say it's been five years in the making might be a bit of an overstatement, but the 2024 Convention and Trade Show is all the stronger for the lessons learned over the past five challenging years. 'Connect. Contribute. Collaborate' is the mantra for Convention 2024, the first since 2019, when the pandemic interrupted life and business as we knew it. The roadshows were very successful in the interim, giving regional members a chance to connect and keep up to date, but nothing beats a national convention for bringing everyone together.

After all, it is that united front, representing the diverse range of regional aviation enterprises, which makes the Association particularly successful in advocating on behalf of members with government and government agencies. The convention will build on the themes initiated in those very successful roadshows held over the past four years, with a special focus on:

- Net zero by 2050
- 'Next Gen' aviation for the regions
- Future workforce development
- Regulatory changes for recovery, and
- Civil aviation in the Pacific region.

CEO, Steve Campbell has been working hard with AMDA's Chris Macfarlane to bring delegates an engaging and comprehensive program, packed with informative speakers expert in their respective fields, and allowing plenty of time for delegate participation.

In this issue

Convention 2024

It's only a little over a month away, so don't miss out – book your tickets now.

New board members

Introducing ... two new faces on the board, as well as a returning one.

CAPS program update

David Anderson gives an update on the CAPS program's inaugural peer training held in November last year.

New CEO for the RAAA

With Steve Campbell's move to CASA, the RAAA has a new chief executive. See the chairman's column.

From the chairman



Mal Sharp
RAAA Chairman
Sharp Aviation

Welcome to the new CEO ...

In the light of our recent changes, we'll hold over my column for this issue, and instead focus on welcoming Rob Walker to the Association. He spoke to RAAA News on the eve of taking up the new role.

Rob Walker takes up the role as Chief Executive Officer of the RAAA on 8 February following Steve Campbell's move to CASA as the Executive Manager of the National Operations and Standards division.

Rob Walker is well known in the industry, having been with CASA for over 7½ years, most recently as CASA's Executive Manager of the Regulatory Oversight Division, and before that, of CASA's Stakeholder Engagement Division. For many years he was also an Executive Manager at Airservices Australia, managing their stakeholder and communications areas, so he has a wide network of industry relationships.

He told *RAAA News* he is 'excited by the new role and looking forward to meeting the challenges facing regional aviation'.

'First and foremost, I will be focusing on the national convention. We haven't had one for five years, nor the benefit of the convention's real power to bring the industry together.'

And that unity is needed more than ever, with a number of near-term and longer-term challenges facing the industry.

'The changing dynamic within industry is creating challenges. The near-term ones are in the white paper. Although it's a 30-year proposition, we still need to call out the near-term challenges such as the skills shortages, both of pilots and LAMEs, and the fact that educational standards are not quite aligned. There are some good plans in place, but we need to keep the pressure on to make sure that things are happening.'

The white paper will set the government's aviation policy for the next 30 years, so we need to make sure the Association is part of shaping it.'

'I have always had a lot of respect for the RAAA's membership. They're remarkable people running highly successful businesses. I'm very lucky that thanks to Steve, the organisation has been reinvigorated and is in very good shape. The Association is very active and professional and I'm honoured to be able to take over and continue the momentum.'

For many years Walker has had a share in a 1977 Grumman Tiger and was looking forward to reinvigorating his flying after stepping down from his CASA role. However, he says that will have to go on the backburner as he seizes the 'opportunity to continue the momentum, trying to grow the Association and provide valued service to members'.

2024 Aviation events

RAAA Events

RAAA Convention and Trade Show

19-21 March 2024

RACV Royal Pines Resort, Gold Coast

<https://www.raaaconvention.com.au>

Other events

Safeskies 2024

'Safety collaboration'
16-17 October 2024

<https://conference2024.safeskiesaustralia.org/>

Australian Aviation Wildlife Hazard Group Forum

'Sharing the responsibility'
August 2024

2025 Aviation events

Avalon Airshow

25-30 March 2025

Avalon Airport, Victoria

<https://www.airshow.com.au/airshow2025/TRADE/about/index.asp>

From the CEO



Steve Campbell
RAAA CEO

The time has come, and it is with mixed feelings that I say farewell to you all, or more correctly 'Au revoir'. Aviation in Australia is a relatively small industry - I'm sure we'll cross paths, so as the French say, 'till I see you again'.

It's timely to reflect on where we've brought the Association over the past three years, despite the many curve balls thrown at us by COVID. Our important advocacy work continued, and we were able to hold some highly successful roadshows, despite the pandemic challenges. Our first at Mildura was held between two lockdowns, and I was really pessimistic about its chances of success. But the membership got moving, Alliance flew in members in their new E190s, and it was a real insight for me into how members are willing to get behind the Association.



Photo | The Gang of Five, IMC in the Snowies. Image: RAAA

After the success of Mildura, with your support, we were able to put our energies into making the roadshows even more relevant, and focus more intently on the future, setting the Association's agenda for the next 10 or 20 years. This aligns with the government's serious emphasis on industry sustainability and has resulted in the Association attracting a whole new group of members, including overseas members such as Eviation in the US.

The sharing of knowledge and mutual assistance members demonstrate has made me feel over the past three years that I was a part of something important and has helped us in our goal of being regarded by the government and regulator as a trusted voice. Our success in this is evidenced by the fact that the paper on the LAME crisis, which offered a simple snapshot of the issues and how they could be fixed, ended up on the deputy secretary's (of the department) desk.



Photo | The Gang of Five, almost 'CAVOK' in the Snowies. Image: RAAA

The March convention is so important for the Association. As you will read elsewhere in this issue, with AMDA's help, we have organised a very strong program, covering off on present and future challenges.

I am leaving the Association in good hands, and it's now up to you all to make it a success. I hope to see you there, wearing my CASA hat. I'm very grateful for how the past three years at the RAAA have prepared me for the new job. They have given me a much greater understanding of the levels of expertise in the industry, expertise the regulator needs to involve more.

Au revoir

Steve

AVALON
2025
AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW
AEROSPACE AND DEFENCE EXPOSITION
25-30 MARCH 2025

Convention 2024 ... cont.

Day 1

After a high-energy start on Tuesday evening 19 March, with the inimitable Matt Hall flying his MXS-R in a precision personalised aerobatics display at the opening reception, the



Photo | Matt Hall. Image: supplied

RAAA is delighted to have the Minister for Transport, **the Hon. Catherine King**, give her opening via video on Wednesday morning.

Her remarks will be followed by an update from her department on the Aviation White Paper. 'The Aviation White Paper will have a fundamental, long-term influence on how we operate. It is vital that our members engage, so that they understand how what is being proposed may affect them, and to have input to ensure it makes sense,' Campbell says. It will set the scene, in the department's words: 'for long-term aviation policies to guide the next generation of growth and innovation in the aviation sector out to 2050', and will focus on 'safety, competitiveness, sustainability and efficiency'. Given the ambitious scope of the white paper, and the government's focus on sustainability, it's vital that RAAA regional aviation members have their say.

The remainder of day one will focus on future technologies and sustainable aviation. Delegates will hear from a range of qualified experts with updates on

sustainable aviation fuels, advanced aerial mobility (AAM) and what tomorrow's regional aircraft will look like. The AAM session will explore questions such as 'what does the growth of AAM mean when facing the realities of operations in the regional environment? Is the technology evolving to support the payload, range and operational flexibility commercial regional aviation needs?'

Peter Smith, with vast experience in the uncrewed world, having served as chairman and director of Aerosonde, one of Australia's pioneer uncrewed companies, and on the board of the Australian Association for Uncrewed Systems (AAUS), will lead the panel. Smith is well versed in the practicalities of bringing aviation technologies to market, having also been CEO of British Aerospace Australia.

Joining him on the panel will be **Natasha Santha**, a partner in Transport, New Mobility and Energy with LEK Consulting; **Dr. Mirjam Wiedemann**, a lecturer and researcher at the University of NSW School of Aviation; and **Chris Smallhorn**, chairman of AMSL Aero and vice-chairman of Safeski's Australia. AMSL Aero is developing Australia's first commercial passenger-carrying eVTOL (electric [battery/hydrogen hybrid] vertical take-off and landing) aircraft.



Photo | AMSL Aero's e-VTOL vehicle. Image: supplied

Another Australian-developed hydrogen electric propulsion system which will be featured at the convention will be Stralis's technology demonstrator, 'Clyde'. Stralis decided early on that 'owing to the urgent need to

decarbonise, their first product would be an existing aircraft, retrofitted with their novel hydrogen electric propulsion system, thus allowing them to accelerate the transition to sustainable flight'.



Photo | The Clyde test bed. Image: supplied

'Clyde', a Bonanza A36-HE technology demonstrator's first flight is planned this year. The test results will then inform the hydrogen electric engine retrofit into the 15-seat B1900D-HE. The B1900, with an 800km range, is scheduled to enter service in late 2026. Delegates will be able to see Clyde up-close-and-personal on the Gold Coast: it will be on display at the Convention.

Day 1 will close with a session on 'Airlines of the South Pacific – Collaborating with Australia'.

Following Steve Campbell's lightning visit to Fiji last year to attend the Association of South Pacific Airlines (ASPA) annual conference and AGM in Nadi, full airline members of ASPA (as an affiliated member of the RAAA), gain RAAA membership benefits and rates when attending RAAA events. This recognises the many common challenges shared by Asia Pacific and Australian regional airlines – just replace remote inland deserts with vast expenses of ocean and isolated islands. The two share similar challenges: operational, the skills shortage and sustainable aviation, to name just a few, compounded by the tyranny of distance, so there's a great opportunity for some mutually beneficial collaboration with ASPA and its members.

Convention 2024 ... cont.

Day 2

While day 1 looks further in the future, day 2's sessions focus more on the issues facing regional aviation in the here-and-now and near future. It opens with a presentation from Airservices on ATC in the future, followed by three panellists discussing the MRO and supply chain issues they face daily, whose lived experience will resonate with delegates. **Alana McKenna**, CEO of Cairns-based specialist engineering services and parts organisation, Skytek; **Criag Jones** of OEM, PMA and rotatable spare parts organisation, CJ Aerospace; and **Daniel Stromski**, MD of boutique aviation asset management consultants, DA Aviation, will explore the challenges of geographically dispersed regional operations.

CASA will outline their current priorities and then we'll hear the latest CAPS program (more on next page). Breakout sessions on flight and LAME training will follow lunch on day 2, including the use of new technology such as next-generation simulators, and virtual and augmented reality to provide more engaging and effective skills training for the pilots and engineers of the future.

Russell Quinn, business development manager with Aviation Australia, and an experienced helicopter line maintenance manager, engineering technical teacher and senior avionics AME, will join **Sheridan Austin**, an aviation specialist with Aviation QMS and author of the paper, 'Aircraft Maintenance Engineer Shortage - Crisis and Opportunities' and **Matthew Wheatley**, MD of Sigma Aerospace to continue the discussion on solutions to the LAME skills shortage.

Patrick Murray, a flight training consultant with Aviation Australia, and with vast experience as a pilot, instructor, aviation academic and operational leader, will lead the flight training discussion.

The 2024 convention will close with a wrap-up from the RAAA Board.

Welcome to new board members

Following last year's AGM and board election, the RAAA board has two new members, Eliza Tipping and Shannon Wells, as well as a board member, David Trevelyan, who has returned after some time out. *RAAA News* profiles the three.

Eliza Tipping, currently serving as the board's TWG Vice Chair, is the Commercial Aviation and Military Senior Account Manager with RAAA associate member, Air BP. She has been with BP for ten years and involved in the aviation side of the business for the past three.



Photo | Eliza Tipping. Image: supplied

Tipping studied materials engineering and commerce at Monash University. Materials engineering, Tipping explains, is 'advancing technology through an understanding of the structure, composition and characteristics of materials – it can be thought of

as "the biology of engineering", with a practical application in research and product development, or in aviation areas such as life cycle analysis, corrosion control and engineering maintenance.

Her goal is to 'continue building on the great work of the past few years (the Association has done) representing members, and ensuring the industry has a seat at the table. 'It's important to make sure the GA community has a voice as the industry continues to rebound and evolve after the past few years.

On the topic of sustainability and new technology Tipping believes that regional aviation is in a unique position in this innovation-focused environment. 'Smaller regional operators have a great ability to evolve at pace and try new technologies such as hydrogen, or hydrogen-electric propulsion – they have unique business opportunities and different scale of production requirements, leading to some exciting opportunities already evolving across the industry'.

She enjoys the unique sense of community in the RAAA, and the fact that members support one another. 'Our members are extremely hard workers, dispersed all over the country but they don't hesitate to come together to look out for each other', she says.

And when she's not hard at work all over this wide brown land, she enjoys more travel – having recently completed a three-week Himalaya trek; good food, good wine and running (for some balance). 'I've recently gotten back into running and completed the Great Ocean Road half marathon last year. This year I've signed up for the Gold Coast Half in July, which is providing some good motivation to get a few more early morning runs in.'

New board members ... cont.

David Trevelyan was on the board for six years (2015-2021) but took some time out to focus on his varied business and professional interests, being re-elected in November last year. He is currently serving as Convention Committee Vice Chairman.



Photo | David Trevelyan. Image: supplied

Trevelyan is board chairman of the Basair Group comprising Bankstown-based flying training institution, Basair Aviation College; the drone (RPAS) training college UVAir; and the aircraft engineering organisation, Eagle Aircraft Maintenance.

He stepped down as CEO of the College in June 2023. 'I had been CEO at Basair for a long time (over 15 years), and when I had finished dealing with the challenges of COVID, which we came through pretty successfully, I felt it was time to hand over to someone who was keen to take on the role. I enjoyed the hands-on role, but it's nice to be able to focus on strategy more now.'

He is currently undertaking a master's degree at Lund University in Sweden in risk and safety management. The Lund

model, Trevelyan says, is very rewarding and challenging. 'The intakes are about 12-15, so they're small groups, including people from aviation, maritime, the safety manager for the European particle physics laboratory CERN, and interestingly, IT. The IT people (from Netflix and Google) want to learn from aviation's good record of learning from accidents.'

Trevelyan chose Lund because he was not satisfied with the way safety management and HF in particular were being taught. 'For example: I once asked an instructor, "How do you tell a student has lost situational awareness (SA)?" He replied, "well, I would ask them to point out where we are on a map, and if they're wrong, they've lost SA." But SA is a process, not a product.'

'What attracted me to Lund is that the University has different perspectives on safety management – I subscribe to he thought leadership of the Lund model. The learning experience at Lund has been fantastic.' He will finish the degree this year by completing his thesis on a topic highly relevant to his current Basair chairmanship and his RAAA board role. The topic he has chosen looks at 'how boards of directors can implement good governance for safety'.



Shannon Wells is an unashamed ambassador for all things Tasmanian and is proud to be the first Tasmanian elected to the board. He is currently serving as the Finance and Administration Vice Chairman. 'I am honoured to be part of the board – they're a great bunch of people.'

Shannon is the Managing Director of Airlines of Tasmania, also known as Par Avion. 'As the MD of a small to medium GA operation, I wear many hats', he says. 'I've been in the industry a lot of my life, so I believe I can bring a different focus to the board. The bigger organisations do not necessarily see or understand the issues smaller organisations face.'

The company operates the airline, as well as Cambridge Airport and a maintenance organisation, giving him a unique perspective on the challenges for smaller operators. He says this applies especially to vital maintenance services.

'I am concerned that smaller organisations may shut down' under the twin pressures of the economic climate and regulatory requirements.

'It's important that the RAAA has a seat at the table to make sure the new (Part 145) requirements

New board members ... cont.

for smaller operators balance the need for modernising the regulations and prioritising safety with commercial considerations. We have to make sure they're scalable and achieve the goals in a practical way.'



Photo | Airlines of Tasmania. Image supplied. Matt Glastonbury.

'We also have to keep the government realistic when it comes to new sustainable technologies. We all want to jump on hydrogen-powered aircraft, but they're not there yet, so we must transition in a sensible way.'

Now focused on management, Shannon has been part of the family business, Airlines of Tasmania, from the age of 12 when he mowed lawns and did passenger check-in. His flying also started early – he soloed at 16 and went for his PPL at 17. After a four-year university degree followed by six years working for the Commonwealth Bank, he returned to the business, where he gained his commercial licence and flew charter and RPT flights.

Airlines of Tasmania, given the natural beauty of Tasmania's landscape, has a strong focus on tourism, luring the 'reef, rock and bridge international visitors south for 'some genuine, competitively priced experiences of the island'.

CAPS update

Come to the convention to hear more about CAPS, or the community of aviation peer support. There will be a brief session just before lunch on Thursday 21 March to give delegates a more detailed update. As discussed in the last RAAA News, CAPS is driven by delivery partners, the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF) and the RAAA, and supported by subject matter expert, clinical psychologist, Tony Merritt of Scentia Psychology, who are workplace mental health specialists.

David Anderson (FSF), Tony Merritt and RAAA chairman, Mal Sharp will participate in a panel session, followed by a Q&A to give delegates the opportunity to pose their questions to the panel.



Photo | David Anderson of the Flight Safety Foundation. Image supplied.

RAAA News talked to David Anderson before the convention for an update. 'We have completed one training course,' Anderson says. 'Thank you to the three people who took part in the beta testing of our training delivery. We now have three peers and are hoping by the end of the year ideally to have 45 trained volunteer peers who have completed our peer initial training.'



The next two-and-a-half-day peer initial training course is tentatively scheduled to begin on 21 May. 'For that course we need 20 people to volunteer,' Anderson says.

However, the first critical step is to gain widespread operator support for CAPS, Anderson explains. 'Participation in the program is free-of-charge, but operators will have to register and sign up for the program formally to satisfy insurance requirements.'

'And having registered, we then need operators to encourage and support individuals in their organisations to volunteer as peers and undertake the initial and recurrent training.'

The CAPS program is available to full-time and part-time employees, and full-time contractors of the registered organisation who serve in safety critical roles. This includes flight crew, cabin crew and maintenance engineers.

The scope for the first phase of the program will be flight crew, cabin crew and engineers, with the desire once it is up and running to extend to a wider group of employees.

Welcome to new members

We are happy to welcome the following companies and individuals as members of the RAAA and look forward to a long and productive association.

Associate members

Moreton Hire



Dan Morahan
General Manager
dan@moreton.net.au

With over 50 years' experience in the events and exhibitions industry, Moreton Hire is Australia's most trusted business event provider. Moreton Hire has delivered some of Australia's most iconic events including but not limited to: Avalon Airshow, Brisbane International Tennis, Beef Australia, Brisbane Truck Show, National Flight Centre Travel Expo & Gold Coast V's. Moreton Hire's full range of products and services include: • Exhibitions & trade shows • Infrastructure • Major event infrastructure including marquees, temporary structures, electrical and HVAC equipment • Furniture & equipment hire • Signage • AVI & lighting hire

Visit www.moreton.net.au or call 1300 360 424.

Skykraft



Iwan Morris
Vice President Business Development
iwan.morris@skykraft.com.au



Skykraft delivers air traffic management (ATM) services from space to serve the global market for air traffic surveillance and communications, especially over remote and oceanic regions. This ATM delivers improved safety (through continuous communications and surveillance); improved sustainability (through more direct routing and trajectory-based operations reducing CO₂ emissions); improved resilience (through multiple levels of redundancy and cyber-by-design); and greater capacity and efficiency (through using 5nm separation to optimise airspace use in congested areas).

Short final

A quick update on Stralis as we finalise this issue of RAAA News.



Photo | Clyde's hydrogen electric engine. Image supplied Stralis.

Bob Criner, co-founder and CEO of Stralis, gave RAAA News an update on the progress of the company's ground testing using the Bonanza A36 airframe, Clyde. Criner says the initial mission profile testing of the motor and propeller replicating the stages of flight went seamlessly, with the 20kg motor very quiet compared to the 320kg piston engine it replaces. Criner says this initial trial was not 'hydrogen-powered, but used DC power from the grid, with the next step to include hydrogen fuel cells using BOC Gas-manufactured green hydrogen'.

The take-up of electric cars has highlighted the importance of having enabling infrastructure in place, so in mid-2023, Stralis was one of 10 key aviation and green hydrogen industry founding members of the Hydrogen Flight Alliance (HFA). The HFA, which includes Brisbane Airport, Gladstone Airport, Skytrans and BOC, aims to develop the hydrogen flight ecosystem required to enable operation of new Australian-made, emission-free aircraft.

Hear more at the convention on Wednesday 20 March.

Want to feature in the next RAAA News?

Email us with your story idea: administration@raaa.com.au