



The Australian Aviation
Associations' Forum

Revitalising General Aviation in Australia

A policy paper from the Australian Aviation Associations' Forum

Issue

A series of issues have led to the decline of the general aviation industry in Australia. They are:

- Overly prescriptive regulation impacting on flying and maintenance operations
- A lack of focus on the general aviation sector within Australia's aviation safety regulator
- The failure of Federal and State training policies leading to a shortage of skills
- The cost of access to training airports and facilities

In response to ongoing concerns, the Government has commissioned BITRE to prepare a report into the state of general aviation in Australia which is expected towards the end of 2017.

Background

While many issues have contributed to the decline, some of the key barriers to revitalising this important sector are within CASA's ability to remedy.

Currently, the CASA Board and CEO are considering changes to the structure of the organisation and TAAAF suggests there is now an opportunity to remedy some of the management and regulatory issues contributing to the decline.

The key issue is that CASA has struggled with general aviation issues for at least a decade largely because it has not enunciated a clear policy or organisational structure that relates risk and controls to the different needs and capacities of the different sectors it regulates. This has led to a slow and overly complex regulatory reform process and significant new costs and complexity.

TAAAF suggests that implementation of the new organisation structure provides the opportunity to establish a renewed focus on the general aviation sector.

Recommendation

TAAAF recommends that CASA:

1. As part of the restructure of CASA a General Aviation Directorate is established to provide both a focus on resolving long standing GA issues and a more relevant regulatory stance towards the sector as identified in the ASRR.
2. Resume the work undertaken by CASA on a classification of operations and, in consultation with industry, provide an overt statement of intent in terms of risk management and regulation of general aviation with the aim of maintaining safety while reducing cost and red tape.
3. Revive the previous work on Sector Risk Profiles and for existing SRPs establish, jointly with industry, an implementation plan and key performance indicators for each sector, with an initial focus on aerial work sectors. Where existing SRPs identify risk controls that are the responsibility of CASA, move urgently to implement the risk controls, including recognition of industry programs as identified.

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The Aviation Associations of Australia Forum (TAAAF)

02 6162 0305 | secretariat@taaaf.org

11/26-28 Winchcombe Court

Mitchell ACT 2911