



RECREATIONAL  
AVIATION AUSTRALIA

Strategic Plan 2023–2025



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# From the Chair

Recreational Aviation Australia (RAAus) is the largest non-profit, aviation administration and advocacy body in Australia. We represent the interests of some 10,000 aviators, operating more than 3,200 aircraft and almost 200 flying schools. Our members are active throughout all states and territories, and we are admired internationally for the freedoms we've earned our community over the past 40 years.

RAAus provides services at almost no cost to the taxpayer, nearly entirely funded by our own activities. Using Class 2 and Basic Class 2 Aviation Medicals issued by CASA as a proxy, RAAus administers approximately half the number of private aviation authority holders as CASA. We do this with a budget of just over \$3 million and with less than 20 full-time staff. This is in stark contrast with CASA that has an income of more than \$218 million with some \$206 million from government sources including fuel excise, and a staffing level of 863 in the 2021/22 year.

Our cost-effective structure and the way that we operate offers clear value to the broader community by allowing CASA to focus on fare-paying passengers that rightly demand a high degree of assurance with respect to safety and oversight. Our existence relieves CASA of the burden to provide similar services to many private aviators noting this needs to be done on a level playing field with CASA complying with the Australian Commonwealth Governments' principles of competitive neutrality.

Occasionally we are requested by government to provide services such as accident investigation without the requisite funding. This often results in

the broader economic benefits being delivered to Australians with the cost being borne by a select few. Nevertheless, it is reflective of the trust that has been earned by RAAus over the years.

Some four decades ago, RAAus was a movement of civil disobedience that has since become an organisation well regarded by industry, government and members alike. Today, we regularly meet with policy makers, regulators, senior industry figures and grass roots aviators. Our reach is second to none and we treat this as a privilege and responsibility.

Having endured the somewhat unusual environment of recent years, from natural disasters through to pandemic, we now find ourselves in a healthy position and ready to resume ops normal. I am proud to present the RAAus 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, the third such plan in my tenure as Chair.

The Strategic Plan is based on the themes of Community, Leadership, Innovation and Safety and are enabled by our organisational values. We shall continue to deliver our services to members across Australia while extending our reach to include our wider-community.

Each theme will combine to build on an already strong foundation and strengthen our organisation for years to come. As a community we have evolved and we recognise the importance of reinventing ourselves while respecting our heritage.

Our movement began 40 years ago with aircraft constructed from basic materials with rudimentary engines, controls, and instruments, and has grown to incorporate sophisticated machines that rival the capabilities of aircraft in the general aviation category of the CASA fleet. It is a fleet with a significantly younger average age, newer technologies and one that is more

environmentally friendly with its use of modern technology in engines and even sustainable fuel and energy sources.

Just as our traditional aircraft have evolved, our organisation has adjusted to cater to changing market demands and we are cognisant of the constant evolution that is continuing today. This means that to thrive we must also respond to forces that are shaping our operating environment.

Our Strategic Plan sets out the high-level objectives we as an organisation are seeking to achieve to ensure our sustainable and robust survival. We will be diversifying our activities, seeking to attract new participants from a range of different audiences and strengthening our value proposition for members.

Those who founded our organisation many years ago likely did not predict what it would look like today and we are equally unable to predict what it will look like in 40 years from now. By remaining nimble and continuing to operate as an agile business serving our members, government and stakeholders in a responsive and responsible manner we can provide value and maintain a viable business.

The coming three years will prove challenging and no doubt trying at times. These years will also be exciting and rewarding. Rewards will come from the hard work and dedication of our committed staff in our Canberra headquarters and across Australia, as they deliver on the objectives outlined in this plan. I am proud to be a member of RAAus and look forward to seeing it prosper.

**Michael Monck**  
Chairman



# Our aspirations

RAAus provides the alternative for Australians wishing to partake in aviation activities in an accessible, cost effective environment supported by a strong safety culture. We exist to advance aviation in Australia and to encourage training across a range of aviation activities.

Our Vision articulates our ambition to inspire and connect people through aviation so that the Australian aviation industry can prosper, and so all aviation enthusiasts have the opportunity to participate.

Our Mission Statement speaks to who we are and how we do what we do. This includes the Board, staff, members and volunteers. Our experience and professional operations allow us to continue to encourage all Australians to participate and engage with our inclusive community.

## Our Vision

We inspire and  
connect people  
through aviation.

## Mission Statement

A respected organisation that continues to advance safe aviation and encourage training across our industry. We do this by creating opportunities for a wide range of aviation activities, through industry leadership, fostering a diverse community, and innovating across light aviation.



# Who we are

Recreational Aviation Australia is the country's largest administrator of pilots, maintainers and aircraft.

Formerly the Australian Ultralight Federation (AUF), RAAus was established in 1983 and since that time we have consistently seen growth, diversification and improvements in our performance.

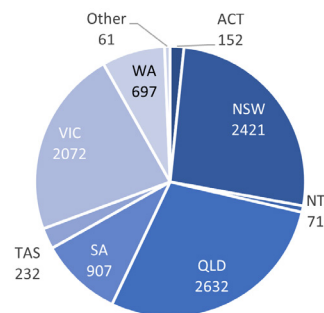
We changed our name from the AUF to Recreational Aviation Australia Inc. in 2004 and in 2016 we changed our governance structure from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. We are now Recreational Aviation Australia Limited (RAAus).

As a Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) Part 149 Certificate holder, we have regulatory legitimacy as an Approved Self-administering Aviation Organisation (ASAO).

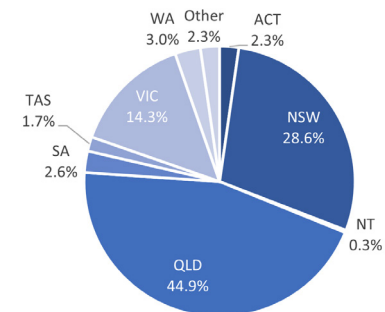
With over 9,000 financial members and more than 1,000 temporary and affiliate members at any one time, we enable more than 10,000 Australians to actively participate in accessible, simple, and fun recreational aviation.

We train people through 181 flight training schools and 29 affiliated clubs around the country and actively promote the advancement of aviation for all Australians.

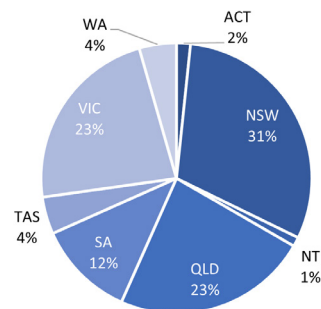
Financial member distribution - Jan23



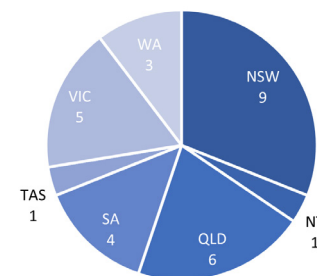
New member demand - Jan23 ( $n=1053$ )



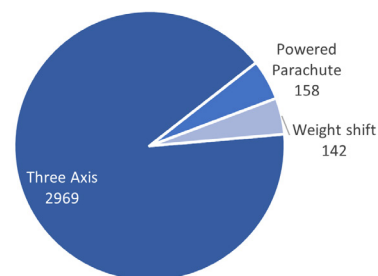
Flight Training School locations ( $n=180$ )



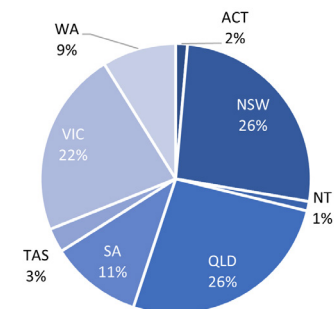
Affiliated Clubs



RAAus Fleet by type



Aircraft by registered location ( $n=3269$ )





# What we do

The core business of RAAus is to:

- Provide Australians with a safe, accessible and cost effective form of aviation.
- Inspire Australians to participate in all forms of aviation, and connect these people to a like-minded community.
- Register aircraft including three-axis aircraft, weight-shift microlights, and powered parachutes.
- Allow aircraft owners and maintainers to maintain, repair and modify aircraft registered by RAAus.
- Support members that design and build their own aircraft.
- Certify pilots to operate aircraft registered with RAAus.
- Authorise instructors to train pilots.
- Develop training material for instructors to deliver.
- Educate members and actively promote safety.

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# 180+

RAAus flight training schools  
compared to 263 CASA (Part  
141) flight training schools

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The RAAus fleet is  
**27%**  
of all single engine  
(piston) aircraft  
<5700kg in Australia

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# 6300+

Active and certificated pilots  
compared to CASA's 10,844  
current PPL and RPL holders

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RAAus delivers services  
to our members with  
**18 staff**  
and a turnover of  
**\$3.02M**  
compared to CASA's 863  
staff and \$218M turnover

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# Member Benefits

Benefits RAAus members enjoy include:

- Operating under a simpler ruleset that permits:
  - self-declared medical standards rather than the ruleset designed for airline pilots and administered by a Government agency.
  - Pilots maintaining their own aircraft.
  - Training with a syllabus that is appropriate for how and what we operate.
- Advanced and more affordable aircraft and associated technology.
- A member insurance policy covering liability to third-parties including passengers and property. The relative value of this policy is many times more than your membership fee.
- Excellent customer service provided by a dedicated and responsive team.
- Access to a self-service member portal to assist in managing your membership, authorisations and aircraft.
- A simple and more affordable cost structure.

As an Approved Self-administered Aviation Organisation (ASAO) our 'informed participation' model allows Australians to operate aircraft using a different ruleset that is fit for purpose and not weighed down with unnecessary red-tape.

Our operations permit a more libertarian approach to aviation thereby promoting innovation and alternative methods for achieving safe operations. We do this without burdening the 'public purse' and as a Company Limited by Guarantee, and we are agile, forward looking and focused on delivering value to our members.





# Our Themes

## Community

We exist for our community and therefore we must grow to nurture this.

## Leadership

With the largest ASAO fleet, number of pilots and maintainers, we must lead by example and responsibly advocate for change across the industry.

## Innovation

We must create value for members through innovative solutions and plan for the future.

## Safety

is at the core of everything we do. The safety of our members, volunteers, the public and staff is paramount.

# Our Values

## Inclusivity

RAAus welcomes people from all backgrounds and we must demonstrate behaviors that champion an inclusive culture. Furthermore, we encourage our members to participate in all forms of aviation and embrace their diversity of interests.

## Stability

RAAus provides stability for aviators, government bodies and other stakeholders. We do this with good planning and governance, sound processes and with a focus on our long-term strategic objectives which are communicated to relevant parties.

## Integrity

Honesty and acting in alignment to the RAAus Member Charter are vital in ensuring that our community is harmonious and compliant.

## Pragmatism

RAAus administers aviation activities in a pragmatic and fair manner that is aligned to the RAAus safety culture, risk appetite and our regulatory requirements. A practical and educational approach will always be our preferred method for working with our members to meet our objectives.

## Simplicity

Everything we do is done with a view to making it easier for aviators to aviate. We question any rule, process, system, or artefact of RAAus that does not simplify aviation. Our simplicity enables us to be responsive and consistent for our members.





# Strategic Objectives

Our Strategic Objectives reflect the areas that will benefit RAAus and its members for the next three years, whilst setting a course for the years beyond.

It is vital that we support our existing members, encourage new members, and recognise there will be a shift from traditional aviation towards new forms of recreational aviation over the coming decade.

With global instability, high inflation and our will to not overcharge for our services, RAAus must be innovative in its approach to financial management. Our Strategic Objectives aim to meet this challenge, and will therefore shift our attention to reducing reliance upon traditional membership and aircraft registration fees. This will be achieved through various means including diversification of the products and services we offer along with accessing new aviation markets.

Over time our offering will expand but our core business will remain. This will provide members with a more diverse range of aviation activities available to them whilst remaining simple, cost effective and safe. We will always continue to deliver excellent customer service within a strong safety culture.

As a small organisation, we are mindful of our capacity, regulatory responsibilities and needs of the membership now. However, we firmly believe that delivering these Strategic Objectives will shape our business and set a sustainable course for the future.



# 2023–2025 Strategic Objectives

Retain existing members and grow traditional base

Increasing membership diversity

Administer new aviation technology

Develop educational pathways

Increase and diversify income sources

Establish and implement a marketing strategy for the organisation

Embed enterprise risk management framework across the organisation

## Focus Areas

- Creating more value and reasons for our members to stay with RAAus.
- Demonstrating value to temporary members and giving them reason to become a financial member.
- Making it easier for our members to interact with us through self-service and intuitive systems.
- Growing our privileges and maintaining a watch on new innovations internationally.

- Developing programs that assist flight training schools to engage in non-traditional markets.
- Seeking alternative funding to allow RAAus to establish pathways for improving our membership diversity.
- Advocate for regulation that permits a simpler style of aviation to be undertaken.
- Working with members to share the benefits of diversity and inclusion.

- Advocating for a regulatory pathway that enables Advanced Air Mobility (AMM) to be administered under Part 149.
- Expanding our Part 149 functions into areas of innovation and new technology.
- Partnering with others that are innovative and that seek to enter the Australian market.
- Establish revenue streams associated with new technology.

- Working with RTO's to establish approved courses for school students.
- Develop maintenance training with established providers to achieve qualifications within existing frameworks.
- Encouraging CASR Part 141 flight training schools to embrace the benefits of dual training pathways.
- Explore opportunities associated with internationally recognised training.

- Establishing new revenue streams to minimise member fee increases.
- Reviewing the RAAus fee structure to reduce reliance of membership and registration fees.
- Expansion of technology-based revenue opportunities.
- Actively managing RAAus investments.

- Establishing a dedicated marketing and brand strategy.
- Working with experienced partners to re-point our digital presence.
- Incentivising pilots and maintainers from other systems to convert to RAAus.
- Modernising our digital engagement with members and the broader industry.

- Further developing our enterprise risk management framework.
- Embracing risk management as a key driver in everything we do as a business.
- Maintaining a strong focus on cyber-security and member privacy.
- Remaining contemporary in our approach to regulatory compliance.



# Financial Strategy

As a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, we have a strong focus on maintaining a sound financial position that allows us to not only deliver services to our members today, but also be prepared for the future.

The Australian economy is experiencing high inflationary pressures and RAAus is not immune to this. A compounding factor for our cost base is that our member insurance premium is increasing at a rate of about 2.5 times that of the inflation rate (approx. 15% YoY). Be it the case, this policy provides

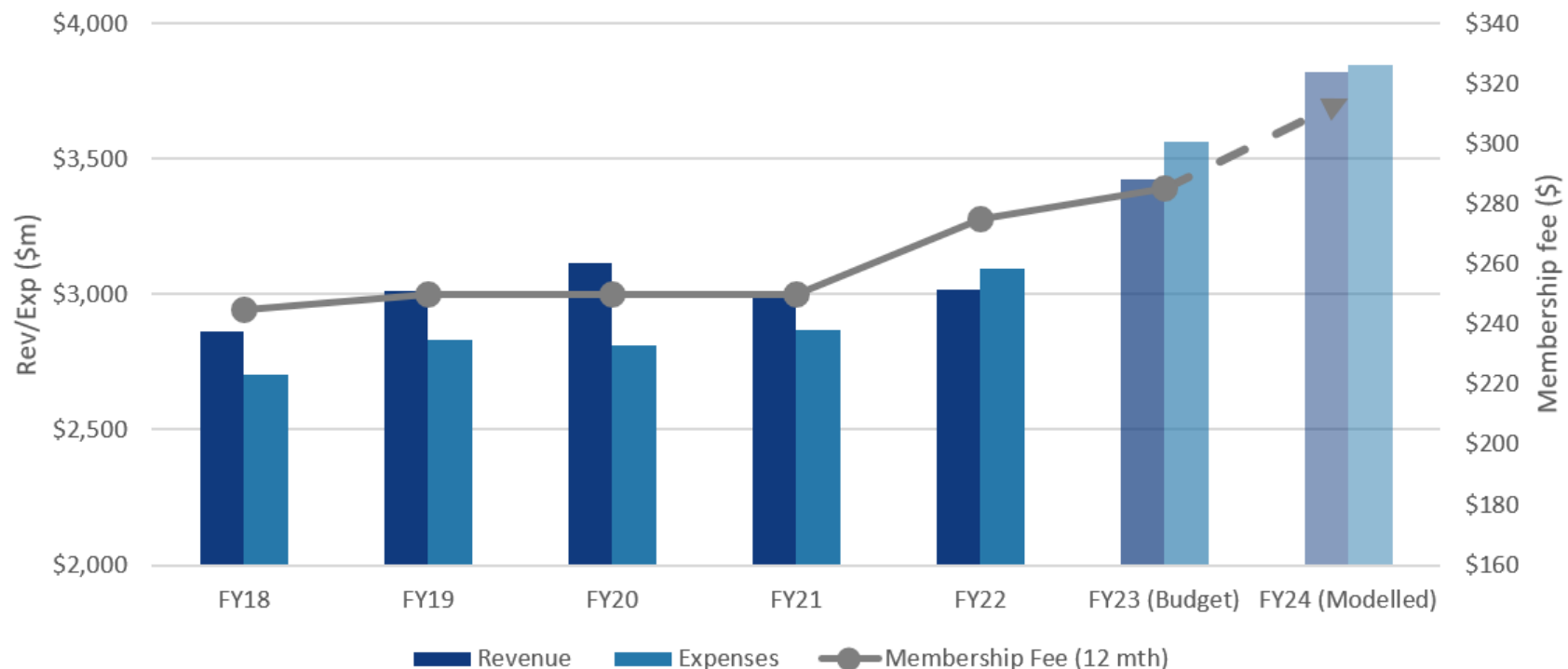
significant benefit to our members and we therefore see this policy only becoming more important in the future. As an example, if an individual was to purchase a policy such as this, the cost would be many times more than the price of an individual RAAus membership fee. This benefit will only get larger over time.

To offset the pressure to our cost base RAAus will focus on establishing other revenue streams to complement our traditional fee-based structure. We will focus on growing the membership and leverage

the advantages associated with our scale to offset a higher rate of membership fee increases. We will also challenge ourselves to be more efficient as an organisation, with stretch targets that aim to reduce our cost base, without compromising our services to members.

Even with our expanded revenue opportunities and organisational efficiencies, we expect fees to rise in the vicinity of 10% year-on-year during the course of this Strategic Plan.

RAAus Financial snapshot - FY18-FY24





# Measuring our performance

The RAAus Board of Directors are focused on the future of our membership and are committed to working towards achieving our Vision.

In order for this to be achieved, each of the Strategic Objectives are designed so that their level of success can be measured, and that real benefits flow through to our members. Individual initiatives have been developed by management to deliver by way of an Annual Business Plan that have documented key performance indicators (KPIs), are appropriately resourced, and are aligned to the Strategic Objectives.

Regular evaluation by management with review by the Board, ensures accountability. In recognition that the environment in which we operate is not static, we will be agile in our approach ensuring continued relevance of each Strategic Objective whilst providing enough time to succeed, but shifting direction as necessary and keeping the membership informed.

The goal of this Strategic Plan is to shore up our existing services, ready us for the future, and Inspire and Connect People through Aviation.

