



19th November 2018

STATEMENT

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

Oversight of Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Hearing Program

Monday, 19th November 2018

My name Tony White – I am the President of the Sport Aircraft Association of Australia – the SAAA.

My credentials - I have been in the General and Sport Aviation sectors for 30 years. I hold a Commercial Pilot Licence, own and operate my own aircraft, and have owned and operated a flight school and aircraft charter business.

SAAA represents almost 1000 aviators DIRECTLY.

There are about 1500 aircraft manufactured and registered under the Experimental category that are flying today, with many hundreds currently under construction.

SAAA has been in existence as an organisation since the 1950s.

SAAA is also a founding member of the Australian General Aviation Alliance - or AGAA.

Amongst other goals, this Alliance formed to speak to Government with a unified voice on matters concerning our licence to fly our aircraft in Australian airspace.

AGAA now comprises 17 aviation organisations whom collectively represent almost 15,000 pilots, aircraft owners, maintainers, aviation businesses and many of Australia's airports.

Many of these aviators are also career aviation professionals, and many of these are experienced Airline Transport Pilots flying some of our largest passenger transport aircraft.

I am here today to express concern on behalf pilots over dual medical standards that have been put in place by CASA.

Particularly in relation to powered aircraft, piloted for private recreational purposes.

The purpose of the hearing today is to consider, compare and contrast the medical and other standards for pilots within the self-administered sector against those of CASA-regulated pilots.

To state the obvious – you are either fit to fly, or you are not.

So why are there multiple groups of medical classification in Australia for private recreational licensing?

The Sport Aircraft Association of Australia

- An active group of aviation enthusiasts supporting the building and flying of experimental aircraft -

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Incorporation No: A0046510Z ABN 65 176 969 964



SPORT AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Today we have:

1. Class 2 Medical - CASA controlled; for pilots flying VH registered aircraft and assessed by CASA approved medical practitioners
2. Class 2 BASIC - CASA controlled; for pilots flying VH registered aircraft and assessed by any medical practitioner against the commercial driver standard
3. Self-Certified Medical - Recreational Aviation Australia (RAAus) controlled and available only to pilots that belong to Recreational Aviation Australia. RAAus is a private company limited by guarantee. These pilots self-certify by declaration that they are fit to drive a car

CASA has determined that the "Self-Certified Medical" (Item 3 above and which represents the lowest medical standard) is safe – WE AGREE.

Why? If deemed by CASA to be safe for RAAus powered aircraft pilots – this should be immediately offered to all CASA controlled private pilots who operate powered aircraft.

CASA has been allowed to establish a double standard of Pilot Medicals that:

1. Financially advantages a privately owned self-administered organisation – RAAus
2. Disadvantages all other private pilots and organisations supporting those pilots operating powered aircraft with VH registration

SAAA is on record as agreeing with the "self-certified" medical.

Unfortunately – CASA continuously evades and hides behind a litany of existing rules and regulations that retain the medical double standard. In fact, CASA in their latest attempt to fix this issue, just compounded the problem with the advent of CLASS 2 BASIC.

This did nothing to resolve the double standard, rather appears a deliberate strategy to thwart removal of the double standard and maintain the RAAus competitive advantage. The continued CASA behaviour to support RAAus growth strategies over the remainder of general aviation, beggars belief. One would have to start questioning if similar conditions were not being deliberately manipulated as was the Royal Commission finding into the Seaview disaster.

To this committee I would state:

1. We fly in the same sky
2. In many cases we fly aircraft of the same or similar performance
3. Those of us flying VH registered aircraft have been trained to a higher standard with CASA regulated flight training rules
4. CASA has been allowed to advantage a private company RAAus and its shareholders against the remainder of the flying tax payers of this country

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SAAA – collectively with other aviation organisations – brought these same issues to a meeting with CASA and the Honourable Minister for Transport at the Wagga Wagga General Aviation Summit on July 9th. SAAA was extremely disappointed when CASA and the Honourable Minister summarily dismissed our concerns and observations on this matter post the meeting.

In summary senators, please don't be misled by any discussion about weight limits or registration marks on aircraft as a means of differentiation between medical standards.

It is black and white – you are fit to fly, or you are not - you are safe to fly or not, all private recreational pilots should have self-certifying Medicals regardless of registration mark, regardless of weight through to the private licence limit of 5700kg.

The creation of differing aircraft weights combined with differing registration marks (under private company control) all being mixed with multiple medical classifications has been the genesis of a CASA experiment gone badly wrong.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring our concerns to this Senate Committee.

For and on behalf of the Sport Aircraft Association of Australia

Anthony Reginald Fensome White
President, SAAA

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