

## **Pilot Training and Air Safety Submission to the Senate**

In respect of the adequacy of pilot training and the looming critical shortfall in pilot numbers, there are several factors that heavily impair the recruitment of pilots and Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineers, not the least of which is the impact of self administered RA-Aus which CASA has championed and supported.

The RA-Aus group operate as virtually a private club and have their own maintenance personnel and pilots, who are not required to have CASA issued licences but are selected “in house” by the management to hold “pilots certificates” and “maintainers certificates” and openly compete with CASA approved Flying Training Schools for students.

RA-Aus students have no career path into mainstream aviation and no training curriculum which is transferrable into the conventional education stream for pilots. Equally the same applies to their maintenance people. A most disturbing element is that some RA-Aus people claim they intend to take over General Aviation.

Airlines generally have reduced their pilot training as a cost saving and their ability to obtain ex military pilots is limited by the wide market for pilots internationally. Traditionally General Aviation pilots are very poorly paid so GA is in an even worse position. There are cultural and language problems in recruiting foreign nationals and there is also the element of potential military conflict with their original nation.

With Aviation Security as a major concern and the historical use of Civil Aviation to support the military in times of war, the ability to provide our own pilots and LAMEs in very much in the national interest and given the long lead time to train such personnel, it is imperative that the Government acts to address this problem.

It is a national disgrace that the only form of motorised transport that does not require the operator to be licenced by the state and registered by the state is Recreational Aviation. If someone drives to the airport they need a photo licence and the vehicle with state registration and insurance and they are subject to police surveillance. When they get to the airport and fly their ultralight or similar aircraft they are not required to have it insured, the national authorities have no record of the registration, the operator is not required to hold a state licence and they operate with little or no surveillance.

Given the statistics, what chance is there for a victim on the ground to sue the pilot or the aircraft owner with any hope of justice?

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