

Honourable Company of Air Pilots (NZ Region)



Issue 9: May 2026

NEW MEMBERS

Nil

DECEASED MEMBERS

CAPT Barry Mitchell

CAPT Ted Ewbank

RESIGNED

Nil

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Greetings fellow Air Pilots,

Since the last newsletter I regret we have lost two stalwart members: Captains Barry Mitchell and Ted Ewbank. A memorial service for Barry at the Auckland Aero Club was well attended by members, and at the service for Ted we were ably represented by John Gemmell. Bill MacGregor has kindly taken over the Treasurer role previously managed by Barry.

The annual call for nominations for the 2026 trophies and awards closes at the end of May. The NZ region is generating a handful of nominations across a range of categories, but we are still keen to hear from you. The terms of reference for awards can be found on the Company website. Nominations (or suggestions for nomination) can be directed to the committee at admin-nz@airpilots.org.

You will have received notification of the impending CAA rules update programme. This a rare opportunity for those in the aviation domain to shape the future of aviation regulation. We are broadly considering the possibility of registering HCAP(NZ) as a contributing party to some of the workshops. If you think you may have something to contribute, we'd love to hear from you.

Following an initiative started by committee member CAPT Mike Zaytsoff, we are currently engaged with our Australian colleagues to explore opportunities for collaboration. I will outline the three key work streams currently being discussed in 'Australian Region Engagement' below.



Finally, as we settle into another Kiwi winter, keep warm and dry and (whether driving or flying) make smart weather decisions. Mother Nature can be even more unforgiving than a disgruntled, delayed passenger!

Upper Freeman Ron Thacker
Chair

AUSTRALIAN REGION ENGAGEMENT

Some time ago, Mike Zaytsoff suggested that we might consider joining the Australian region's pilot mentoring programme and with the committee's blessing he reached out to our antipodean colleagues. They were open to the idea and so, on 19 April, committee member Richard Beaton and I joined a VTC discussion with Adrian Young (the Australian Chair) and a couple of his mentoring team. The outcome of that meeting was an invitation for NZ region pilots to join the Australian region's mentoring scheme. The details of how this will work have yet to be determined, but it is likely we will be asked to contribute some mentors to the scheme. I may reach out to you in this regard in the future.

Following the discussion on mentoring, Adrian noted that they were also open to tailoring their existing Young Air Pilots Australia (YAPA) network into an Australasian network, to include NZ pilots. While we have very few young air pilots (i.e. those under 35 years of age) at present, the peer access enabled by this scheme might provide an incentive for younger aviators to consider joining the Company. We will explore this concept further.

Finally, Adrian outlined the work the Australian region has done fostering relationships with universities that provide aviation training courses. Based on non-binding Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), these relationships provide a mechanism for Air Pilots to provide specialist support to aviation courses (e.g. guest lecturers or one-off seminars like the recent 'Bridge the Gap' seminar we ran in Auckland) and afford universities the possibility of using the Air Pilots network to conduct joint research (e.g. through our various technical groups). I have reached out to Ashok Poduval, the head of the Massey University School of Aviation, who has expressed an interest in developing this idea. I will meet with Ashok in the near future to discuss how such an MOU might work for us and will then consult with your committee before formalising any such relationship.

MASTER'S VISIT

We are in the process of developing the visit programme for the visit to New Zealand by the new Master, Elizabeth Walkinshaw. While some details have yet to be settled, I can advise the following schedule of events:

Saturday 14 November: A guided visit to the Air Force Museum at Wigram between 0900-1200hrs. Air Pilots in the region will be invited to join this tour, and to join the Master for lunch in Christchurch afterwards.

Monday 16 November: Industry visits in Wellington, followed by a Cocktail Reception at the Wellington Club from 1730hrs.

Tuesday 17 November: Visit to RNZAF Base Ohakea (Flying Training Wing and No 3 Squadron).

Wednesday 18 November: Visit to Massey University School of Aviation.

Friday 20 November: Industry visits in Auckland.

Saturday 21 November: Warbirds flight at Ardmore, followed by our annual formal dinner at RNZAF Base Auckland from 1830hrs.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We are due our annual general meeting in July. I anticipate having an agenda and AGM invitation out to you in early June. Given the tyranny of distance and the rising cost of travel, it is very likely that the AGM will be conducted virtually.

MONTHLY WEBINAR

Our series of professional development webinars continue at 1000hrs on the second Wednesday of each month. You should have all received email invitations to join these webinars – if not, please contact the secretary and we'll ensure you are on future invitations. These presentations are conducted in partnership with the NZ Society of Air Safety Investigators (NZSASI) and are open to all who are interested.

*“Flying is the second greatest thrill known to man... Landing is the first”
Anonymous*

