



South African Model Aircraft Association

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Historically, taking over the chairmanship comes with a lot of challenges from the outgoing SMC. I know for a fact this was the case with our former Chair that spent the first two years of his tenure trying to get hold of all the loose ends and trying to tame this beast that is supposed to be a relaxing hobby! With this in mind Marthinus approached me in 2016 to come on board as the SIG Chairman, get experience of all the inner mechanisms, introducing me to all the right people in SACAA, AEROCLUB, RAASA, a contact list that he had to build up sitting through endless meetings while trying to get SAMAA recognized as a proud section in the Aviation community. For the first time a new Chairman would not be thrown into the deep end, the transition would be easy.....So on the 12th of March 2020 I was handed a smooth sailing ship.

The Universe, Carma, Fate, call it what you want has a strange sense of humour because 15 days later the world as we know it, changed forever, the new SMC suddenly found themselves in uncharted territory with a barrage of phone calls, emails and questions posed to us by a very frustrated membership. I would like to thank each Member of the Management Committee for their dedication through the first few months of the pandemic, answering questions that had no answers yet, putting up with rude phone calls and dealing with impatient modellers that wanted to hear no reason.

COVID-19

I am happy to report that for most of our clubs, COVID-19 protocols are now a way of life, thanks to the teamwork from Club officials. Weekly reports keep coming in, regular reporting of infections makes it easy for the office to do contact tracing if necessary. I would also urge Members to remember that masks may be removed while flying to prevent fogging up of eyewear, they must always be worn around the pits. Social media poses great problems to individuals that do not adhere to these protocols and they are easily identifiable.

By now members should have noticed the change of strategy by the SMC in our bi-weekly communication. We have had incredibly positive responses from members who are now more informed about all new business of the association. BIG THANKS to Alec Groenewald the author who tirelessly devotes his free time keeping everyone informed. Alec is also working on a marketing strategy that will take our sport to new heights.

The long awaited CATS24 has been amended and it is now possible to fly aircraft up to 35kg by law. It is however a requirement to register the particulars of the aircraft with the office and for the pilot to have the right proficiency rating to be able to fly the airplane.

INSURANCE

Another curve ball for the first term in office, we as SMC had to deal with a change in industry standard relating to our insurance Policy. Upon our renewal of the Policy we became aware that certain exclusions were made that would put members at risk and extensive negotiations followed to get the Policy to an acceptable standard that fits our needs. We still have the "AIRSIDE EXCLUSION" that will cause great grief for events and clubs operating on full size AERODROMES. The SMC as always will work closely with affected clubs to find suitable solutions.

At the beginning of February SAMAA office were given two weeks' notice to vacate the space at DENEL. We again thank them for all the years they allowed us to operate from their premises. For now the decision was made not to enter into a long term contract as COVID-19 has put restraints on our finances. In due course the SMC, with our memberships blessing, can make decisions relating to acquiring premises and maybe even be opening our own museum.



Associate member of the Aero Club of South Africa. Affiliated to the
Fédération Aéronautique Internationale.
The SAMAA is a non-profit, public-benefit organisation, PBO Reg. No. 930030082.





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A resolution taken by the previous SMC to update our proficiency system did not get any traction due to COVID-19 constraints. Our insurers and SACAA accept our current proficiency system as licensing and we urge our members to treat the system as such! Your rating is not a nice to have, it will be your only protection in case of a claim.

Our Competition calendar got off to a very shaky start in 2020 with the F2B and later F3A World Championships being cancelled. I feel sorry for the teams that put in a lot of effort getting ready and then not being able to compete. The Aerial Concepts Power Nationals were held in September and was very well attended under the circumstance. Most of the SIG's could get a result and crown their new National Champions. Well done Roland (SIG chairman) for pulling it off in a short space of time.

LAST but not least, I want to recognize the efforts of our Vice-Chairman Burt Botha. Without whom I would never have volunteered for the position as Chairperson of this organisation. His expertise in legal and financial matters is invaluable. Myself and the SMC team are looking forward to a great 2021 with lots of flying and great camaraderie.

Safe Flying

Danie Potgieter
Chairman



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