



COMMERCIAL UNMANNED AVIATION ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (CUAASA) PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018: MR SEAN REITZ

The past 12 months have been a particularly active period for CUAASA.

During this period, we have experienced changes to our Board with Adam Rosman resigning as President and myself taking up the role. In addition, Stephen Verheul and Mark Mansfield also resigned their posts. New members include: Melissa Hadley and Victor Radebe, bringing the current executive committee to 7, including Kevin Storie from CAASA.

The portfolio allocation is as follows:

Acting President	Sean Reitz
Regulatory	Ken Venn, supported by Melissa Hadley
Government Stakeholders	Victor Radebe
Communications and IT	Dean Polley
Membership	Nico Van Rooyen
CAA internal	Kevin Storie

Our strategy during the past months has changed from an exclusive CAA engagement to one where we are actively engaging a variety of industry stakeholders, in particular the Economic Cluster of Government.

CAA Engagements

Our CAA engagements started with the dossier that we compiled and submitted to the DCA in May of 2018. In this document, member losses were quantified in excess of R480 Million Rand and highlighted the fact that several members were being forced to the brink of bankruptcy.

In addition to the ongoing engagement with the DCA and her team around the concerns raised in the dossier, we were also involved in the pursuit of an enforcement enquiry into various concerning matters, including the ABSA light show amongst others.

These engagements, supported by CAASA, along with individual member organisations seeking legal and internal investigation involvement have resulted in increased focus on the sector and movement within the CAA.

The November CARCOM proposal for the revision of part 101, submitted by CUAASA, resulted in a regulatory amendment workshop which took place on the 15th of May 2019. The CAA, for the first time acknowledged that the RPAS sector may have been over-regulated and therefore a process of revising the current 101 regulation has begun. International alignment with JARUS and/or EASA is a stated goal in the longer term with short term relief being offered in the form of an AMOC to deal with the RLA process. Whilst it is still “early days” it is likely that a process of categorisation will unfold and that the new regulations will ease the entrance of low risk, single person operations.

On the 29th of May 2019 the CAA convened a stakeholder meeting (SARIF) where the various Government and municipal, as well as industry stakeholders were invited to offer input into the future landscape and regulations of the RPAS industry. Terms of reference were published and circulated. During the meeting CUAASA was announced as one of the permanent members and will be engaging in future meetings as well as various expert workgroups that will flow from the process. It remains CUAASA’s intention is to facilitate an enabling environment and allow growth of the sector. We will be calling on members to contribute to the various working groups.

Other engagements

In addition to the various CAA meetings, we have engaged with ATNS and as a result ensured senior staff attendance at the CAA regulatory workshop, thus creating a more aligned environment.

In March we engaged key economic stakeholders in the Economic Cluster of Government, and this resulted in a workshop facilitated by the Department of Economic development, chaired by the DDG of Economic Development and attended by 72 key government stakeholders. During this meeting there were presentations by the DOT, ATNS, CUAASA as well as the Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs. In his wrap-up, the Deputy Minister called on his colleagues to create an enabling environment that will result in the creation of youth jobs and the growth of the new economy.

Later in March we presented at the 4IR summit convened by the Moses Kotane institute and supported by KZN economic development. Here too the contribution to job creation, manufacturing development and the growth of the KZN economy were well received and KZN has indicated a keen interest in becoming a hub for drone activity in South Africa.

During the past 12 months members of the CUAASA Board have attended and, in some cases, presented at various local and international meetings and through this process have remained up to date with international regulatory developments.

During the year, membership numbers have fluctuated with smaller members struggling financially due to the challenges and are therefore no longer in a position to fund membership. This year has seen several new members join, with Bell South Africa becoming the first “certified

aircraft manufacturer” to join the association. We look forward to other similar manufacturers joining the organisation as Urban Air Mobility and Freight become a reality.

I would like to thank our excellent board for their efforts, determination and teamwork that has got us to this point and for the time and money that they have expended to do so. It is important to note that in most cases they are running start-up companies with limited administrative support. A special thanks to Kevin Storie for his significant contribution to our efforts and to the CAASA board and secretariat for the ongoing support.

SEAN REITZ

PRESIDENT