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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of AOPA SA held at Stellenbosch Flying Club on Thursday 3 June 2010 at 19h00.

The chairman of Stellenbosch Flying Club (SFC), mr Nicholas Horwood, welcomed the executive committee of AOPA (president Dirk Uys (DU), chairman dr Koos Marais, (KM), Chris Marthinus (CM), Roger Bozzoli (RB), (Meent Borchers sr, (MBsr), Meent Borchers jr (MBjr) and Alan Davson (AD) to their club and introduced the chairman of AOPA, dr Koos Marais (KM) to the meeting.

KM found the meeting legally constituted and declared the meeting open.

The minutes of the previous annual general meeting, held on 19 August 2009 in Pretoria was read and adopted as a fair and true reflection. (Proposer Dirk Uys, seconder Chris Marthinus)

KM delivered his report:

“Once again it has been a great honour to serve the association for this, my second term. It has been a busy year with many highlights and one or two disappointments.

Firstly, thanks is due to my hard working committee members. Without their support, it would not have been possible. They have no idea how much their words and deeds of encouragement mean to me. All of us are volunteers who receive no financial remuneration for our services. In fact AOPA costs us all money. Members like Meent Borchers, Dirk Uys, Chris Marthinus and Reinie Guldenpfennig have to take days off from work to attend meetings at CAA. They use their own transport to get there and spend hundreds of rands on telephone calls in order to attend to AOPA business. Alan Davson drives from Tzaneen and back just to attend our meetings. Other committee members are Willie Bezuidenhout, Roger Bozzoli, Armand Greyvensteyn and Jan Boezaart.

This year we saw the further consolidation of our administrative processes. For a few months my daughter, Soekie acted as secretary and lately this role is being fulfilled by my wife Ingrid. My thanks to both of them as well. Obviously this situation is not ideal and we should appoint a full time secretary as soon as possible. However that will bring with it also the need for a dedicated office, a very costly exercise in Pretoria or anywhere else. Our membership base is growing on a daily basis but I will not rest until the numbers run into the eight thousand.

Peter Blaine deserves special mention. He has maintained the books of the association over many years and continues to do so now. He has full access to our accounts and keeps his eye on the finances.

I updated our website on a regular basis but have to say that I receive little support from members. I plead with members to visit the website and to also post comments and news on the forum.

The growth of AOPA has been noted by both the authorities and our “competitors”, EAA, SAPFA, Aero Club and CAASA. Earlier this year I was invited to attend a joint meeting at Paddafontein in the Thabazimbi district where we founded the GACC, the General Aviation Co-ordinating Committee. The representatives are myself, Paul van Tellinggen and Frank Eckard (SAPFA), Kevin Storie (Aero Club), Neville Bohm (EAA) Kim Gorringe (CAASA) and Chris Marthinus (AOA). Since the formation we have had three meetings and we are in regular contact. The question is often asked “Why so many alphabets?” In other words, why so many organisations? I have come to learn that there is a need and a place for all of them, most of all for AOPA. AOPA is the only truly independent representative body of general aviation. All the others pay tribute to the authorities in some way or other. We speak with our own minds and mouths. While I appreciate and applaud SAPFA's efforts in organising the PTAR and other events we need a specialised advocate for general aviation and that is what we do.

We arranged a very unique event this year, the flight training congress with our international speaker dr Jerry Cockrell, a regular on the American circuit. The idea was to look at modern concepts of flight training. Dr Cockrell with his impeccable credentials and entertaining style held his small audience captive for the entire day. He was supported by a presentation by EAA president Neville Bohm. I want to bring dr Cockrell back to SA and have written to the CAA to get accreditation for his presentation towards CRM currency. I learnt a lot from hosting this presentation, not the least of which is to not attempt to charge pilots any significant money for registering.

The main thrust of AOPA's activities has been, and always will be liaison with authorities. Some will call it conflict and there is some truth there. Our exco members attend the regular CARCOM and Industry Liaison Forum meetings in Midrand and make extremely valuable contributions there. This is so important because it is at these meetings where decisions are taken which affect all pilots and aircraft owners in the country. We simply have to be there. If we don't attend these meetings we shouldn't complain about regulatory issues. I want to thank Meent Borchers, Reinie Guldenpfennig and Dirk Uys specifically for their valuable work and for sacrificing full working days in order to attend these tedious meetings.

In addition to CARCOM and the ILF, I have written perhaps hundreds of e-mails to CAA. Captain Colin Jordaan recently asked me to re-think my e-mail war. I replied to him that then they must first stop doing the things that cause me to have to write these e-mails. We have a cultural problem in the CAA. There are people in CAA who consider themselves a law unto themselves. But what makes it worse is the fact that there are pilots who for years have accepted this attitude thereby strengthening the hands of these dark forces. I am referring mostly to the airworthiness department of the CAA. The situation in this department is almost untenable. The systems are non-functional and the inspectors (some of them) are like loose cannons. During the past year I and some members of my committee have had four face to face meetings with this department at Midrand. At the second last meeting the chairman ended the meeting with a remark “that he didn't think there was a problem in his department.” At the last meeting which captain Colin Jordaan himself chaired, this person had reason to regret that infamous statement. Capt Jordaan and his entire team admitted that they indeed have a major problem. And now AOPA has a direct door to the Director/Commissioner to get these problems sorted.

The Certificate of Airworthiness / Currency issue has been the major problem. Other problems have been dual inspections, the infamous 38th Amendment, the recent MAN number 43 and Modification Approvals. All these problems have been brought about by officials and inspectors of the airworthiness department who have decided to rule by

decree and not by regulation. This year we have fought this attitude with everything in our power. I am happy to report that we have turned the corner. For the first time, the Director have taken notice of the problems. Previously he had been told by his officials that there had been no problem. He now knows that these problems do in fact exist.

Why do we fight these draconian decrees? Because it is costing the pilots and aircraft owners money. The CAA have instituted a decree that should your C of A lapse your aircraft should undergo a re-inspection of R3350. We pointed out to the CAA that they were acting illegally which caused a few red faces. Also, after our vehement opposition to MAN 43 they agreed to shelve those ideas, to the great relief of the AMO s in South Africa. We will and must continue to oppose any injustice and unfairness in the industry. To me that is the sole reason for AOPA s existence. We want justice, nothing more, nothing less.

Two weeks ago AOPA had an exhibition at the Rand Air Show where we recruited a number of new members. This was a project of Roger Bozzoli and he worked very hard at it. We must continue recruiting new members and we need a presence at every air show but that requires a lot more Roger Bozzolis.

In one week s time the vuvuzelas will herald the greatest sporting event this country has ever seen. Unfortunately it has also brought with it the unfair, unjust, illegal and unconstitutional flight restrictions. We have opposed this at every possible venue and forum and we have had lengthy discussions and consultations with lawyers and advocates. This has made us unpopular with the Police, Air Force and CAA but I have no regrets. The most prominent AOPA member in this fight was Chris Marthinus and I thank him.

We did this because it was the right thing to do. And make no mistake, we had our little successes. Just six weeks ago certain officials in Port Elizabeth and Durban especially, were smugly telling GA pilots that they should forget about flying for the six weeks around the World Cup. That prompted us into action and we launched a campaign to get affidavits from interested parties country wide. It had the desired effect. There is no more of this wild talk going around. We eventually stopped short of applying for a court order because it was the prudent thing to do. We reluctantly accepted learned advice that it would not be very wise to attack the SAPS, SAAF, and CAA in court because they would be backed by FIFA. Our current position is that we consider the restrictions illegal and we will support any of our members who are prosecuted as a result of the restrictions. In other words we have passed the ball into their court.

We are having our AGM at Stellenbosch because AOPA is a national organisation. We are not a Pretoria or Gauteng group. We represent members from all over the country. But AOPA is also part of an international organisation with 470 000 members. In 1992 the World Assembly of AOPA was held in Johannesburg and two weeks ago I was asked to submit a proposal to host the 2012 World Assembly again in South Africa. I am proud to announce that we have indeed submitted that proposal to the 2010 World Assembly which is due to start in Tel Aviv on Sunday 6 June 2010. We hope to attract hundreds of delegates from all over the world to come to our beautiful country and to attend the 2012 World Assembly. I trust that the incoming chairman and his or her new committee will have the support of all the aviators of this country to host this prestigious event.

Koos Marais 3 June 2010"

KM's report was ended with a short video illustrating AOPA SA's current bid to host the 2012 World Assembly.

DU delivered his report and stressed the importance of getting the youth involved in aviation.

CM reported that AOPA had been continuously developing and evolving their strategy in opposing the draconian flight restrictions. He also announced the formation of a central

reporting desk as part of AOPA SA's airport watch project. Members are asked to report any strange behaviour at and around their airports, especially during the 2010 FIFA soccer world cup.

AD regaled the audience with his life history and his account of the demise of GA in both Zimbabwe and Zambia. He warned the audience against complacency and apathy.

A number of questions were raised from the floor. A few members were concerned about the strange actions of the SA weather service. KM announced that AOPA SA was already involved in negotiations with SAWS.

The election of office bearers took place. The previous committee was re-elected and Peter Blaine (PB) and Erick Gerber were newly elected.

The meeting was adjourned at 20h30.