

Uni



Gliding

The Official Journal of the Adelaide University Gliding Club

WEBSITE: www.augc.aus-soaring.on.net

G'day All,

Another month has passed and I get to put fingers to keyboard again and write a few words about the club and what is happening. This last month has been one of unseasonably mild weather which could be confused with autumn rather than the middle of winter. While the westerlies have yet to show up *en masse* (only a couple of ridge days so far) we haven't been on the ground waiting for the wind to die down like last year. Congratulations go to [Scott Lewis](#) for going solo in quite an impressively short amount of flying, and to [Angus MacGillivray](#) for re-appearing back on field and getting his passenger-friend rating by surviving my attempts to scare him to death!

Last month also saw the club annual dinner, which everyone who turned up enjoyed immensely. I certainly had fun handing out achievements certificates for all those little indiscretions that occur from time to time. I have now started taking notes for next year's dinner.....

Next month will be one of much activity around the place, which will include the Form 2 inspection of the *Club Libelle*, the Uni open day, club house renovations, building hangar doors for the new hangar, and much, much more. We might even do a little bit of flying too! Come along and join in the fun!

And lastly, a little bit of my personal life: Earlier this year, I was in the running for a couple of exchange positions in New Zealand. Unfortunately I did not get either of the jobs. I am due to get a new job within the Air Force at the end of the year anyway and currently there are no jobs that will be vacant that appeal to me. As such, I have applied to take next year off with the intent of going overseas for 12 months. If this plan comes to fruition I will have to resign as President either late in December or early in January. Things are far from definite yet and the Air Force is notorious for last minute changes, but I will certainly be trying my damndest to escape for a while.

I hope to see you all flying sometime,

Anthony
President

Monthly General Meeting

Wed 4th August 7.30 pm Canon Poole Room Adel Uni

[Mandy Wilson](#) will demonstrate how to use a parachute.

Ten Thousand Feet Above the Sea

by [Brad "GuppyFish" Carletti](#)

Pressure. Being pressed back into my seat as the glider is hauled into the air by a ground-mounted winch. Almost defies logic. The glider soars into the air at a forty-five degree angle, gaining altitude at an incredible rate. Finally the glider begins to level out, and with a jarring crack drops the cable. The craft drops and leans into a sluggish turn to the left, as the instructor begins searching for thermals to raise us to a decent level.

I'll admit to having had nerves on the trip up to the airfield. I kept my mind off it by admiring or deriding the scenery, as appropriate. There's some interesting roadside attractions near Dublin... apparently there's going to be (is?) a waste dump there, so a bunch of people made mannequins and put up small billboards informing the public of the dangers of the dump. My favorite is the "environmental observer" UN military watch point with the French flag flying overhead. Conversely, also on the way up is the infamous Bolivar treatment works. Hold your breath.

My initial nervousness is quickly overridden by the exhilaration of flight. We begin hard circling in a rapid thermal, gaining altitude with a vertical speed of 6 knots a ... whatever knots are rated against.

The next time up was very different. The club carools, so I went up with two other gliding guys, both of them solo-qualified. It was definitely an interesting conversation. One of them, a doctor who has chosen the path of pathology ("I'm sick of people having a piece of me," he says. "Now I'm going to have pieces of them.") recounted a trip to Germany, his experiences gliding there, and the differences between German gliding and Australian gliding.

Eventually, we reach 10,000 feet (a figure which I later, when I had the presence of mind to think of doing it, calculated to roughly three and a third kilometers in the air!). The clouds are so close I feel I could crack open the canopy, reach out and touch them. The feeling is indescribable, the view unbelievable. From my position eighty kilometers away, I can see clear from the Gulf of St. Vincent to the Spencer Gulf, and I was informed that it was not a good day for visibility.

Speaking of good days – that very day there was a storm that grounded all the aircraft and forced us to close the airfield. One moment hot as Hell and the next a torrential downpour. Still, it was fun. I was driving the winch at the time, and also ended up running the radio and maintaining the logsheets.

Another trainee came running to us from the Puchatek (apparently Polish for 'small cuddly bear', an odd name for an aircraft if ever I've heard one) which had landed a good two hundred meters away. So I set out to meet her halfway. When asked what the problem was she replied,

"Nothing, I just felt like running."

"In the rain?!" I replied, incredulous.

*We ran to the winch where I heroically took cover from the rain (not before offering her my spot, of course). She then proceeded to **take off her shoes** before running back! Across a field of wheat stubble! I told her she was a nutter and she just laughed.*

We brush the underside of the clouds and our 'canopy mists over'.

"We flew through the clouds!" I exclaimed, ecstatic after the flight.

"The correct term to use is 'My canopy momentarily misted over.'" I was informed.

"Cloud flying is banned in Australia but not in Europe. Otherwise they'd never fly."

We fly over a place called "Snowtown". I manage to resist the temptation to make wise-ass remarks about the name – one based on pronunciation and the other the climate. My instructor wants to see if they were playing cricket there. I glance down at the Snowtown cricket oval but cannot see anybody on it, however I doubt I would have managed to see them anyway – cricket is not a fast moving game and the human eye reacts best to movement.

It's quite interesting looking at the ground from a great height. I took great pleasure in looking at people reduced to insignificance below me. Must speak to the egomaniac in all of us.

After a good hour in the air, we learn that the other trainees on the ground are getting impatient and so the instructor decides to take us home and let some other trainees have some time in the air. I fly us back to Lochiel airstrip, and I experience yet another acrobatic feat.

Stunt flying is like a roller-coaster ride, only you get to make it up as you go along. One of my previous flights had been with a pilot who told me in great detail beforehand exactly what maneuvers to expect. That was when I was still new to flying, so it didn't do me much good. But the flight itself was great fun. I don't think I'll be able to enjoy another theme park in my life. They'll just seem tame by comparison.

Airbrakes on, nose down... straight down... freefall... pieces of wheat debris flying up to the canopy roof, along with my logbook... hanging forward held in only by my harness...

Then a sudden, crushing slam of G force as we pull up scant meters from the ground. A pack of crows caw angrily, having been startled into flight by our rapid descent. Trim set, we come down to the airstrip, flare, and come to a scraping halt as the nose pitches forward and hits the ground.

Airstrip makes our little launching point sound like a mini Adelaide Airport. It's not. You may have gathered already that a wheat field surrounds the airstrip. It's a pair of long, cleared patches of bare earth set about 30 degrees from each other. But it serves our purposes admirably – no one has ever run out of airstrip on us and we haven't tried landing 737s.

I crack the canopy, undo my harness, jump out of the *Puchatek*, and stretch. Wow, that was fun. I need a drink.

AUCG On The Net

Yes, the club has its very own presence on the Internet. Find out heaps of useful information, and check out what's happened before it's even happened! (Well, almost.) Click away now to:

<http://www.aucg.aus-soaring.on.net>

You can also stay in touch via the e-mail list:

aucg-people@internode.com.au

If you want to join this list send an e-mail to:

aucg-people-request@internode.com.au

AUGC & the GST: An Initial Analysis

by [Anthony Smith](#)

I recently attended a presentation on the GST that was provided by the SA Office for Recreation and Sport. The introduction of the GST will have a big impact on Adelaide University sports clubs, and AUGC will be no exception. How big an impact remains to be seen and depends largely upon the AU Sports Association and the Australian Taxation Office.

The most noticeable impact is that the club will lose its sales tax advantage when purchasing capital equipment. Presently all the Adelaide Uni sports clubs enjoy a sales tax exemption when they buy equipment for their club. When the GST is introduced, we will be paying a GST on the equipment we buy, effectively making new equipment purchases 10% more expensive for us. Other gliding clubs, which were paying sales tax, will enjoy an effective reduction in the cost of their equipment by around 5-10% with the removal of sales tax.

AUGC is now presented with a choice. Being a non-profit organisation with an annual turn-over less than \$100,000, we do not have to register with the ATO and we then do not charge a GST on our flying rates. We simply absorb the increased equipment cost, fly more hours each year, or increase the flying rates by say 5% - not as much as the 10% GST but enough to cover the increase in costs.

Alternatively the club can register with the Taxation Office and charge a GST on our flying rates. The club then can claim a tax credit on the GST that we paid on our equipment and the balance is claimed/paid to the ATO, i.e. $\text{GST on flying rates} - \text{GST paid on equipment and supplies} = \text{net payment to ATO}$. If we spend more on the GST on equipment than what we get from the GST on flying rates, then we get a tax credit. Yes, the ATO pays the club money. However, flying rates are effectively increased by 10%, a cost which is carried by club members: us!

We will also be paying a GST on GFA fees. Hopefully the cuts in other taxes and duties will mean that the GFA will be able to provide their services cheaper than they currently do. Also the farmer will start charging the GST on the lease of the airfield.

Next comes the really good bit. Students joining the Sports Association will pay a GST on their membership fees. It is now more expensive for them to join the Sports Association and more expensive to fly. Great! The Sports Association gives the club a substantial grant each year to cover new equipment and some running costs, from the membership fees of students. This grant, at the present time, will have the GST applied to it. As the Sports Association doesn't get any extra money to cover this we may see up to a 9.09% reduction in the amount of grant money that we receive. Yet to be resolved is how it will balance: i.e. it may be that the $\text{GST paid on Sports Association membership fees} - \text{GST paid on Grant Money} = \text{net payment to ATO}$ (the Sports Association gets to keep enough of the GST on membership fees to cover the GST on the grant money).

We will see some small benefits out of the reduction in excises on petrol etc. Overall the government forecasts that sports clubs will be 4.5 % more expensive. (AUGC will be worse off because we will lose our sales tax advantage that other clubs will gain.) However they balance this by saying that people will have more money to spend. I don't know how many people are restricting their gliding due to a shortage of money, I think it's more a shortage of time. The only way to minimise the impact of the GST is to fly more during the year and this means getting more members. The only way to escape paying the GST, is that if by some miracle, the Sports Association succeeds in getting an exemption. This article is fairly negative towards the GST, which I think on average is a much better tax system than what we had. I also think that I have painted the worst scenarios possible and in all likelihood, it will not be this bad. Certainly a major priority of this and next year's committee and that of the Sports Association will be to implement the best option of the GST possible.

AUGC's Changing Shape?

(Adapted from an as yet unpublished paper 'GLIDING'S POWERHOUSE' by [Emilis Prelgauskas](#))

OVERVIEW

Over the years, the Adelaide University Gliding Club has maintained its high penetration into its target market in terms of members vs market size, whereas gliding in general and the majority of clubs in particular, have seen declining numbers.

What could be expected to be reasonable levels of participation in gliding was first tested in an AUGC published paper in 1979. This was followed over the years by a number of other papers on similar such postulated aspects of gliding club management, many of which are drawn on in summary in the paper below.

A POSSIBLE AUGC SHAPE

There are discussions within the club to change the fleet composition and other aspects of the club. This paper traces the forces which might be contributing to those pressures.

AUGC has been a mid sized club for many years, with a structure set by its founders (Tony Kiek and self) to be suited to the particular market the club serves.

AUGC has maintained its member size, and built its asset base. In the same period other clubs in the region in contrast have maintained their asset base but have experienced declining member numbers.

Changes to circumstance are not only responding to internal issues, but to those broader issues as well.

So a club committee might look at AUGC's changing member age and experience profile, and at the apparent large size of the club now compared to its peers in the region, and make decisions on assets.

This paper puts this in more abstract terms, so that AUGC can compare its decisions with quite different decisions by other clubs. The latter may look strange to the outsider, but as will be shown by examples below, in the abstract framework given here, each makes sense in its own way.

GLIDING'S POWERHOUSE

Some people are despondent about the decline of the sport of gliding in the numbers of glider pilots. Meanwhile, the contemplation of gliding and its issues has been going on continuously through a few people in the sport over a number of decades.

Some other people occasionally come up with hopes of a 'magic bullet' that will solve everyone's problems. Yet those who have been looking at the complexity of the sport for a long time, instead look for contributing issues, causes and reasons which together may also point the way to longer term solutions. In that review, a recurring theme is that the gliding club is the 'engine' or 'powerhouse' which makes gliding possible at all. This is where the coal face between newcomer and the sport exists, where the ground, air and support resources are.

For many years, 'the gliding club' has been considered in its traditional role - as the provider of the support resources that permits the individual to get into the sport.

At the end of the millennium, this is now seen as a simplistic view. It is now possible to also:

- buy gliding from a commercial centre at one end of the spectrum, or
- by personal ownership of a self launch sailplane fly as a lone independent operating private owner at the other.

The spread outward of differing expectations of what 'gliding' is has reached an all time maximum.

Nevertheless, 'the gliding club' is still a valid symbol of gliding's powerhouse. However, it needs to be considered more closely than the simplistic analyses of the past, with its definitions broadened to accept those wider operating categories.

In this paper, here I will draw on the thinking by a number of people within gliding to suggest some of those wider categories and component issues. Those then suggest some of the ways some gliding clubs are and can re-invent themselves to contribute to gliding's future.

This paper takes as its base starting point, that gliding as a whole wishes to be 'successful' into the future. The corollary is taken that where gliding clubs are 'successful' then that is part of achieving that sportwide goal.

I have deliberately left that definition of success quite vague at this point, because I believe readers will be quite surprised at some of the 'successes' that I will be pointing to later.

Here are some of the criteria that have been used to test success in gliding clubs in the past:

*** GFA Member Numbers.**

Generally the only statistics available have been the annual ones published in the Australian Gliding Yearbook. So for many years the sign of success of a gliding club was taken to be its official member numbers. The bigger the better.

Later below, some other members statistics categories will be suggested which may be more useful at the individual club level in defining success.

*** Club Category.**

Over the years clubs have been found to 'wobble' in membership size, each generally within a stable range of minimum and maximum member numbers. From looking at all clubs Australia wide, 4 categories have been suggested:

CLUB TYPE	GFA MEMBERSHIP
A	More than 120 members
B	More than 70 members
C	More than 20 members
D	Less than 20 members

Each club category has been found to characterise some club operations features which suit that membership size in terms of focus on pilot types; and later this will be compared with fleet shape and other similar criteria.

Later below, some additional club categories will also be suggested; and a fair portion of this paper will look at which criteria are consistent and which are not within each category.

* **Club Fleet Shape.**

Many years ago in correspondence between similarly interested people, Tony Hayes contributed his thoughts on fleet shape. He has since moved on to make major contributions to the ultralight movement. Tony envisaged that a gliding club could be defined by how its fleet was 'shaped'. The shape is in effect a floor plan, with: training 2 seaters at the top, simple to fly single seaters in the middle, and high performance gliders at the bottom.

This permits: hourglass, diamond, inverted triangle, and triangle shapes to form.

Later below, we will attribute preferred fleet shape to club categories as part of measuring success.

* **Other Criteria.**

Other people have contributed criteria such as pilots:glider, \$ spent/pilot/annum and so on as ways of measuring gliding's powerhouse to influence change and achieve success.

New Categories.

In an attempt to be less simplistic, further categories in each of the criteria above have in more recent times been suggested.

Membership.

The 'Global' Membership.

Henk Meertens has suggested that to appeal to outside observers, the sport should measure its global participation; to include short term and day members. GFA member categories were amended in recent years to make this possible. Beverley Matthews has suggested that a further useful overview of membership include the individual club's social members including inactive pilots, 'friends' of the club, and spouses of active pilots, who should all be taken regard of in setting the 'global member number'. This is the approach suggested in this paper; these numbers are therefore known only to clubs themselves.

The 'Powerhouse' Membership.

Also, only clubs know their 'powerhouse' number, which is the actual number of committed individuals within their club, those people who seem to almost 'live' at the club, doing all those tasks that underpin the club, its maintenance and initiative projects, fill the holes in the rosters, and so on. So now we have above 3 member related categories that we can relate to other success issues in gliding clubs.

() **Club Types.**

In addition to the traditional club categories, we can now add the independent operator, the commercial centre, and so on.

We need also to differentiate between: the club type each club actually thinks it is, what it tells the outside world it is, and how others in gliding see the club. These are likely to differ.

For example:

The type 'D' club might promote itself as a type 'C' club in apparent resources to be more attractive to the general public, but might be seen by others within gliding as just a collection of independent operators, and not a 'true' club at all. (My home club for example).

Club Fleet Shape.

The 'A' type club could be expected to have an hourglass shaped fleet. Lots of two seaters at the top of the fleet to meet short term member and training needs, a few transition single seaters, and then a serious fleet of performance sailplanes for badge, contest and hire & fly use, and those owned by private owners.

The 'B' type club could be expected to have a diamond shaped fleet, with some two seaters and high performance sailplanes, but primarily single seaters suitable for a wide range of pilots in the club to fly.

The 'C' type club could be expected to have an inverted triangle fleet shape with mainly two seaters being used in both training and early solo flying roles, a number of single seaters suitable for everyone to fly, and perhaps one high performance sailplane available to the most experienced pilots. (This was traditionally the most common club size and fleet shape in the sport prior to the spreading out in types of gliding in the mid 1970's; and led to charges of 'President's aeroplane', etc.)

The 'D' type club could be expected to have a triangle fleet shape; with only one 2 seater for occasional TIF or check flight, perhaps a single transition single seater, but mainly high performance sailplanes for the club's predominantly experienced pilot membership.

The apparent fleet shape can be distorted when private owner sailplanes are included in the measurement mix. The result is that sometimes apparently strange decisionmaking in committees occurs, as the examples below can show.

(An example taken from real life.) An 'A' type club (interstate) had historically had by far the largest membership in its region. It had accumulated a large fleet and assets, had moved to full week flying complete with dedicated training fleet and staff. It had attracted a large following of private owners based on the site. (There is at least one such club in each region of Australia. This one however is recognisable by its committee decisionmaking only a few years ago, which at the time horrified some observers in gliding, and some of the affected club members.)

The committee decided to reinvigorate the club by a series of linked actions - substantially increasing fees, selling off some of the high performance end of the club fleet, buying more middle level sailplanes. The effect was also to alienate some of the club's members and in particular private owners.

While the committee of the day are unlikely to describe it in these terms; below is an outline of the 'success' of that club's move made in terms used in this paper.

Everyone had traditionally external to and within the club seen the club as a classic 'A' type club including its large GFA member numbers, large short term member numbers, and hourglass fleet shape which included a large number of private owners attracted by low fees in comparison to the support site, facilities, and professional staff available.

The incoming club committee saw things differently. That the club had slipped in member numbers, particularly in 'powerhouse' terms, was afflicted by accumulated debts from trying to maintain that 'A' club status, and saw no strength in the hordes of private owners attached to the club.

In effect, they saw themselves as now taking a 'B' club profile, complete with a predominantly diamond fleet shape. Separating the commercial operation aspect of the club allocated that entity with the majority of the 2 seat fleet. The trimming of the fleet at the high performance end, and increasing middle fleet resulted in the change of fleet shape. Private owners leaving because of fee changes for other sites in the region completed the transformation.

The club subsequently saw a diminution of debts, trimming of its overheads; outsiders saw the club as less attractive for the private owner to attach themselves.

So, how does the model presented above define this move down as a 'success'?

The club committee took the 'courageous' step of reexamining its place in gliding; and deciding to move away from comfortable stereotypes. Rather than looking at aggregating the maximum number of GFA members as its measure of success; the committee looked at the relationship between its powerhouse member numbers and its global numbers. Private owners represented very small numbers in both categories.

The move of private owners to other sites has arguably strengthened those clubs elsewhere in the region, some of those clubs being able to attract them into the 'powerhouse' part of their club.

Meanwhile, at our example club, the changes meant that 'powerhouse' numbers hardly changed, nor did the global numbers made up by the active long term club and short term course members.

So while traditional measures of GFA members and fleet shape suggest that the club has declined, in operational terms the club has been improved in efficiency terms by the change. Not that that change was brought about without pain to some members, or in fact parts of the club itself.

The point of the story?

That 'success' is sometimes less than obvious, and our understanding of the forces and mechanics of gliding's 'success' is less than perfect.

From AUGC's Perspective.

In the framework above it would be argued that traditionally AUGC is 'C' club, complete with inverted triangle shape fleet. Lots of 2 seaters, some mid level single seaters, and a little high performance stuff.

There are people who suggest that because AUGC is now the largest club in SA (if not in GFA member numbers, but in global member numbers?), it should take an 'A' position. This leads to the suggestions that the club needs less mid level single seaters, but more high performance single seaters.

Whether this is right or not can only be decided by checking the club's 'powerhouse' and 'global' member numbers. Information only the club committee has access to.

It seems likely that in AUGC's case, it isn't practical to grow from 'C' to 'B' size by the natural means the average club would, because of the continuing annual influx of ab-initios which make up a sizeable part of AUGC's global membership.

On the other hand, a jump from 'C' to 'A' is a big one. If it is done the wrong way (say there aren't adequate powerhouse member numbers to underpin it) the club could be expected to come undone in the short term future.

An option is to look once again at the the club's diverse roles. Does it have the senior pilot numbers to underpin a high performance fleet. Or should this continue to be the task of the private owner fleet.

Is the training end of the club strong enough to justify the move toward staff. In effect separating the commercial end of the club from the solo pilot sporting end.

Perhaps the framework above helps put those divergent demands for change into some kind of perspective.

[Emilis Prelgauskas](#)

B.ARCH ARAIA

SO YOU WANT TO HELP AT WEST BEACH?

- Do you want to help fix the gliders or build the winch at West Beach, but can't get there?
- A lift is available from the Adelaide University footbridge at 7.30 pm Mondays and Tuesdays.
- You can also ring Anthony on 8393 2646, E-mail: anthony.smith@adelaide.on.net. He can organize a lift for those who need it.

SO YOU WANT TO GO FLYING THIS WEEKEND?

- You must ring the club contact person, [Matt](#), on the Thursday before, between 8 pm & 10 pm, on **018 810 963** so that he can organize instructors and transport for those intending to fly.
- A lift to Lochiel is available from the Adelaide University footbridge at 7 am, from the Caltex Service Station on Port Wakefield Rd, Bolivar at 7.30 am, or from elsewhere (by arrangement only) if you have real transport problems.

→ Remember to phone the contact person or you could be forgotten