

TAURANGA GLIDING CLUB

STRATEGIC PLAN 2010 (Operative)

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Tauranga Gliding Club

1.0 Introduction

1.1 History

The TGC has developed over the last 50 years to be a well financed and equipped operation. With the moves from Tauranga to Belk road and back, the club has been “steered” by men & women of vision. These visions provided finance by way of strategic property investment, established as a method of self insurance. The result of this financing provides a good fleet of aircraft and excellent facilities

1.2 General Focus

Currently the Club is very well positioned financially. With the very high population growth in the Tauranga region we do not seem to be growing proportionately. The changing trend in how people spend their leisure time is having an impact on the growth potential in our club. If we are to be a leader in the gliding movement then we need to address the leisure market as it is now and as it will be in the future. It is no longer acceptable to a large number of the population that a pilot takes his or her family to an airfield for a day while he (or she) goes around talking and having the odd flight. The market (more and more) demands attention and smaller time slice commitments. We as a club need to decide whether we look at new initiatives to progress or regress for standing still is not an option.

1.3 National Trends

The national trend for Gliding New Zealand members is very clear and is duplicated in other sports and other countries. The number of members is declining and the average age of members is increasing. This leaves the NZ market for prospective members in two major categories. Those who have just started expressing their desires to fly (age 16-35) who have some discretionary, disposable income. And those who now have the time and money to experience those things that have been put on the “backburner” for some time while the family grew up and careers were formed. (45 plus). It is agreed there will always be a number that fall outside these categories, but the majority of potential new members lie in these groupings.

Summary

Those of you who have been around a while may recognize the above as excerpts out of a Strategic Plan discussion document prepared in 1997. However, the comments remain relevant to the club 12 years later. Why include historical information in a strategic plan for the future? Well...as one great man said; “ *Those that fail to learn from history, are doomed to repeat it.*” *Winston Churchill*. He also went on to say “*Success is the ability to go from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm*”. Gliding can be like that some days.

2.0 Mission

- To become the 3rd largest NZ gliding club by 2012.
- to promote, foster, and encourage the sport of gliding in all its forms.

3.0 Membership

The biggest challenge that we face is that of membership.

3.1 GOAL

To grow the membership back to 80 plus members and to do this we need to:

- a) Retain members
- b) Recruit new members.

3.1.1 Retaining Members

We need to know why members leave our club and ensure that any deficit in equipment, attitudes, social or operational reasons are addressed to minimise the numbers leaving.

ACTION: *Have a questionnaire for departing members.*

ACTION: *Club captain to follow up with departing members and enquire as to their reasons for leaving and report back to the committee.*

3.1.2 Recruiting Members

The promotional activities for attracting members needs to continue and to be reviewed and upgraded from time to time. As well as having the best training equipment and the best trained instructors we need to have a good "club spirit". One that supports and nurtures members needs and aspirations.

Activities need to include:

- a) Media promotion wherever possible
- b) Training schemes & packages
- c) Mentoring of new members
- d) Good administrative and support services.
- e) Excellence in club communication.
- f) A vibrant club "social" scene.

Action:

- a) *Provide Press Releases on any possible occasion eg election of committee, badge flights, acquisition of new equipment, members competing in competitions. Any other excuse.*
- b) *Provide at least one major training scheme per year. This should be aimed at a group of trainees and could include a scholarship, night school, youth glide scheme. These schemes need to be planned at least 12 months ahead and promoted accordingly.*

- c) *Assign an instructor to each new member*
- d) *Provide a monthly news letter and up to date website for news*
- e) *Club captain to organise at least 4 functions/activities per year. Such functions to be cover a range of activities to include the full membership. They may include BBQ, away trips, other non gliding activities eg "swap" days with other sporting groups.*

3.1.3 Costs of Membership

Membership fees at the moment do not seem to be a barrier to entry and should be maintained at a reasonable level for full members. Historically membership fees have been set to cover administrative costs. As a policy it is suggested that Tauranga club subscriptions be based on costs of budgeted items;

Electricity, phone and committee stipends

Plus Gliding New Zealand levy

Plus Gliding Kiwi subscription.

To meet differing membership requirements a small number of options may be added to the basic subscription. for example.

- a) Single seater unlimited hours fee. *Currently \$600pa*
- b) Any glider unlimited hours fee. *Currently \$800 pa*
- c) All flying until solo option (including tows) *Currently \$1499*
- d) Introduction to flying: (Trial Flights)
- e) Single flight with tow to 2,000ft *Currently \$95*
- f) Single flight with tow to 3,000ft *Currently \$150*
- g) Initial training package (4 flights to 2500ft). *Currently \$299?*
- h) Night School package. *Currently \$800.00.*

4.0 Glider Fleet (March 2010)

- Janus two seater
- Puchacz (x2) two seater
- PW 5 (x2)
- LS 4

4.1 Goal

To have the most appropriate fleet (facilities) for our needs

The highest profile part of the club is our fleet.

To address the needs of members the club needs to review members requirements on at least an annual or biannual basis to best reflect the makeup of the club. Are there more trainees requiring training aircraft, are there more advanced pilots requiring higher performance aircraft. What are our launch needs?

A fleet review should

- a) Identify aircraft that are ("out of favour") no longer serving the clubs needs
- b) Identify aircraft that are losing value

- c) Identify aircraft that are proving expensive to operate.
- d) Match the membership requirements with the fleet available

Action:

- a) *as part of this strategic plan conduct a pilot meeting fleet review annually or bi-annually.*
- b) *the club should look into the possibility of upgrading the glider fleet with a high performance dual glider that may be used for cross country training (Under way).*

5.0 Training

With a membership of 80, available statistics indicate that we need to train approximately 12 ab initio new pilots each year. To achieve growth from 60 plus to 80 plus members in the medium term this requirement would equate to some 15 new members per year. This would indicate that the current basic trainer fleet is more than adequate.

To handle the peak summer time load a fulltime visiting instructor should be appointed. This instructor could be from overseas with good command of English and the ability to teach the NZ curriculum.

Action:

- a) *Review instructor capacity to handle up to 15 new members per year utilising all the clubs resources.*
- b) *Identify the need for and appoint a full time instructor for the summer season*
- c) *Look into the acquisition of a suitable training flight simulator and associated flight training aids also investigate a suitable position for the Flight Simulator setup.*

With the development of Computing power and appropriate software, the use of a dedicated flight simulator would allow ab-initio training during the evenings and bad weather days. This would also allow training booking sessions. Eg 10am Sunday morning one hour of aerotow or basic use of controls. We need to get the most efficient training system available to address time poor students requirements.

Action:

Acquire by purchase or rental, an appropriate training flight simulator.

6.0 Tow Planes

Currently we have two tow planes. The reason for two tow planes is historical. In past years we have done as many as 1200 trial flights in a year. We have consistently provided tow planes to ATC training camps and Competition towing. Towing is the biggest single operational expense we have and needs to be monitored. It would be in the clubs best interest to review this two tow plane strategy when a suitable new or used tow plane, that is capable of replacing our existing two tow planes, comes on the market.

To continue operating from Tauranga we need a tow plane that

- a) Has minimal maintenance costs

- b) Has an engine that will be best suited for the towing process.
- c) Will run on available fuels for the foreseeable future.
- d) Will have the takeoff performance to take a fully loaded two seater from 04 to be at least 150 feet above the row of hangars in still air.
- e) be able to land easily within the confines of the available runway given the provisions of the memorandum of understanding. (Perhaps a retractable towrope)
- f) to be environmentally friendly regarding noise.

Action:

Review available tow plane options annually.

Towpilots:

If we are to retain operation and control of our own tow planes then we need to ensure we have an adequate supply of towpilots who are available to cover the towing needs of the club. Consideration needs to be given to the training flight requirements identified above.

Action:

Provide an "acquisition" plan for maintaining an adequate level of skilled tow pilots.

7.0 Hangarage

We have sufficient hangarage for club gliders and tow planes. Excess space can be rented out to club members for the purpose of storing their GLIDERS and only gliders.

There should be an annual rental scheme where members pay a monthly amount for the privilege of storing their gliders in the clubs hangar.

An ad-hoc scheme where any spare space is available to club and visiting GNZ members may pay an amount for short stay storage.

Action:

Set appropriate hangar fees annually dependant on space available and needs of members.

8.0 Pilot Facilities

- a) The caravan provides basic pilot facilities and amenities when waiting on the airfield. With the exception of toilet facilities most airfield needs are met.
- b) Retrieve vehicle needs to be reliable and effective. The current ute configuration meets these needs
- c) Clubrooms.
 - Some thought needs to be given as to the current layout in the clubhouse.
 - Should there be a wind shelter around the western access door.
 - Should we have a webcam, weather station mounted.
- d) Information. Members need to have easy access to relevant information. Rosters, membership lists, their responsibilities as members, relevant rules

and regulations. Hardcopy of this should be in one place as well as available electronically. This information should be kept up to date.

Action:

- a) *Review clubhouse facilities and layout.*
- b) *Update all documentation in hardcopy as well as being available on computer.*

9.0 Location

Looking out Fifteen years there will obviously be a number of changes at the Tauranga Airport. Increased Air Transport operations will affect the use of airspace. However a counter argument is that increased flying training will have a larger effect by “clogging up” the circuit area.

It appears that we will continue operating from the airport as it is and remains significantly the cheaper operating solution for the club. Even with lease payments and landing charges, the cost of operating from Tauranga is assessed as way below operating from our own piece of land in the local area. (Rates, maintenance, finance charges etc, etc)

The challenges ahead are mainly for operations on the airport. Changes to runway usage and control of visitors to the gliding site will be two of the major changes that we will encounter over the next few years.

10.0 Investments

It would be wise for the club to continue its investment policy to cater for the possibility that one day we will have to move from our current location. By maintaining and growing our assets in line with the growth of Tauranga we should stay on the “money go round”. As rural property prices increase, so should the value of our assets. This will mean that the club will need to review its investments in property in order that the best returns are obtained over the longer term.

| Notwithstanding the above, the needs of current members need to be taken in-to account and we should not defer any reasonable expenditure whether on facilities or aircraft.

Financially speaking the club is in an excellent position with assets.

Action:

| *Produce both an annual operational budget and- where possible a 3 yearly capital expenditure forecast.*

11.0 Promotion

A strategic plan is only in place to give a guideline for promotion. In the dynamics of operating the Gliding club, opportunities to promote (Shopping Mall/school displays, trial flight advertising, brochures etc etc) are appearing all the time. The strategic direction therefore is to “keep on keeping on”.

A budget needs to be set for targeted direct advertising eg to support training or Trial Flights). The committee may review the operating budget and any promotional budget.

Flight Bookings: Currently trial flights are booked via Adventure aviation. A booking system is in place to ensure that student & Pilot members do not get “bumped” off the flight line. To increase profile? Income? Utilisation? some increase in trial flights may be warranted. Any increase in trial flight activity will need to be adequately resourced with instructors & towpilots.

Action:

Provide a marketing plan for the next 12 months. This to be provided by the committee or committee delegate.

The club however should plan each year to provide some activity or review of activity that will help achieve a regular stream of new members.

12.0 Administration/Club structure

The club is administered by an elected committee who are mandated by the constitution to meet monthly to deal with the clubs running. The clubs constitution currently has some anomalies and perhaps does not best reflect the club in modern times.

Action:

Committee to review constitution

13.0 Summary

13.1 Grow the membership (back to) 80 plus members.

Action:

- a) *Have a questionnaire for departing members and follow up by Club Captain with report back to committee.*
- b) *Provide Press Releases on any possible occasion (eg election of committee, badge flights, acquisition of new equipment, members competing in competitions. Any other excuse.*
- c) *Provide at least one major training scheme per year. This should be aimed at a group of trainees and could include a scholarship, night school, youth glide scheme). These schemes need to be planned at least 12 months ahead and promoted accordingly.*
- d) *Assign an instructor to each new member*
- e) *Provide a monthly news letter and up to date website for news*

- f) *Club captain to organise at least 4 functions/activities per year. (Such functions to be cover a range of activities to include the full membership. They may include BBQ, away trips, other non gliding activities eg “swap” days with other sporting groups.)*

13.2 Have the most appropriate facilities for our needs

Action:

- a) *As part of this strategic plan conduct a pilot meeting fleet review,*
- b) *Review instructor capacity to handle 15 new members per year utilising all the clubs resources.*
- c) *Identify and appoint a full time instructor for the summer season when and if required*
- d) *Acquire by purchase or rental, an appropriate training flight simulator*
- e) *Review available tow plane options annually / biannually.*
- f) *Provide an “acquisition” plan for maintaining an adequate level of skilled tow pilots*

13.3 Have a sound, viable club operation

Action:

- a) *Set appropriate hangar fees annually dependant on space available and needs of members.*
- b) *Review clubhouse facilities and layout*
- c) *Update all documentation in hardcopy as well as being available on computer.*
- d) *Produce both an annual operational budget and a 3 yearly capital expenditure forecast.*
- e) *Provide a marketing plan annually. (The marketing plan should provide for a return over and above the investment in time and money for any proposed promotion/activity)*
- f) *Review constitution*

APPENDIX 1 - SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- We are one of the largest clubs in NZ
- We own an asset that provides revenue and capital growth
- Most members live within fifteen minutes of the club
- We do have dedicated and committed members
- We have a modern facility that is convenient for all that use it
- We have an excellent system of raising revenue (joy flights)
- We have a good training system
- We have a good mixed fleet of aircraft that caters for all needs
- We have a private fleet
- We have an experienced senior (age and/or time) membership

Weaknesses

- We are dependent on a few to do those things that keep the club going
- We currently have few training members (what is our target)
- We are a voluntary club
- A complete lack of a coordinated marketing plan
- No real forward or Business plan (other than associated with the fleet)
 - What is our operational plan?
 - What is our financial plan?
 - What is our organizational plan?
 - What are the goals of the club?
 - Where do we want to have the club in 5 years, 10 years and how do we get there?
- Our fleet is aging and requires regular upgrading, be it two year or five years
- We have a \$400k debt
- A lack of social events
- A mono culture of membership (white, males, 45-55+)

Opportunities

- We are located in a central position within a major centre, with a population of over 100,000
- Identify our core source of potential members and specifically target it
- Make the joy flight operation more professional
- There is a large number of visitors to Tauranga that maybe interested in a joy flight (but don't know we exist)
- Expand the joy flight aspect of the club to include cruise ship passenger joy flights
- Make the joy flight experience more memorable (photos, vid etc)
- Tauranga is a fast growing city with many people that are successful and looking for opportunities for their leisure time
- To develop the clubs off field asset to increase its capital value (There are many ways to do this)
- Look at packaging the club activities with other flying based

- Increase membership by doing something differently (Corporate days or single issue groups or clubs (not gays), Chamber of Commerce)

Threats

- Declining membership
- The airfield becoming more and more difficult to operate on
- The club being asked to leave the airfield
- A significant incident on the airfield involving us or not
- Growth of other options for flying on the airfield
- Growth of other options away from the airfield
- The gliding movement as a whole is having declining membership issues
- Interest rates increasing
- Economic recession
- Leakage to other clubs (Matamata, Taupo)
- Many flying distractions on our entry road (Café, Flight simulator, MASH helicopter, power joy flights)

Next Step

Achieve the following goals;

- a) Enhance our Strengths.*
- b) Address our Weaknesses.*
- c) Take advantage of our Opportunities.*
- d) Eliminate our Threats.*

*The above four steps are achieved through **IMPLEMENTATION** of a **Strategic Plan**.*

APPENDIX 2 - DRAFT MARKETING/PROMOTIONAL PLAN FOR 2010