

Draft Strategic Plan – TGC – Future Direction

Note: This strategic plan reflects the current thinking of the committee about the future direction of TGC. It is a living document, which will be updated from time to time as things change. It is intended that this strategic plan be continually updated, and at least annually. The committee is now seeking feedback from members before finalizing and implementing this plan. Your feedback is valued – make sure you have your say.

What is our agreed purpose?

Our constitution states that the club's purpose is:

To promote, foster and encourage the sport of gliding in all its forms and to provide facilities for training members and instructing new members in all phases of gliding.

The Committee's view is that no further action is required in respect of reviewing the Club's purpose under it's Constitution at this stage.

Generally the committee is in agreement that while the club needs to continue to support all forms of gliding (eg. recruitment and training of new members), we need to reset the club for the actual active members that it has, and provide those pilots with the aircraft they want (eg. greater cross country and competition emphasis while retaining ab initio training capability).

The Membership

How do we increase it? What can we do to increase activity?

Suggestions are:-

- Offer "learning to fly for free". Providing they join the club and pay a membership fee, then the first (say) 5 hours of instructor, glider and towplane would be for free. Place ads in local paper and target social media to lift the profile of the club and to generate interest for the new season. Cost to the club would only be the tow costs which can easily be absorbed in the short term, some of that cost would be underwritten by the membership fee in any event. See what the interest is and perhaps have to limit numbers to 10. Applicants should be interviewed to make sure they have a genuine interest in the club and are suitable to teach so that they are likely to carry on once complete. Could get some interest from members of the Tauranga Flying School as a cheap way to get started.
- Once hooked, then promote [\$1,999] to solo package (subject to costing of this package being confirmed by committee).
- Target our existing marginal cross country pilots and "coach" them into having the confidence to fly cross country more, particularly on the new LAK. Up skill our marginal XC members to appreciate the qualities of the Duo (which are never realised in local flying). The spin off from this is we move the club towards the positives of cross country flying. Those being, more time at the club, more interaction, more competition, greater challenges and a pathway forward to future goals, greater retention of existing members.
- Daylight saving flying - extra night of twilight flying (Thursdays) for daylight saving period. Wednesday afternoon flying in summer to extend into twilight flying as well.
- Develop a separate plan to grow youth glide (separate subcommittee to be formed). Those in the age group 14 plus and the obvious channel to this youth is through the colleges, technical schools and university population. There are 15 institutions within the greater Bay region with a population I would guess in excess of 15,000 stretching from Waihi to Whakatane. If the Club could attract interest in a gliding experience somehow through these institutions there may some small percentage that would carry on with membership. I believe it was Selwyn College that annually promoted a gliding opportunity to students and the club dedicated a weekend to flights for these students at a nominal rate of something like \$25/flight. I don't believe the club realized any

additional immediate membership from this exercise, however as we have seen people will come back to an earlier experience and develop on it as I did. If the Club could distribute some information packages through the Colleges and promote an aviation experience there could be some downstream benefits to membership. The best way to do this would require, of course, direct contact with College administration. The objective I would suggest is to have a dedicated day for any Colleges that show or have students that would like the gliding/aviation experience.

- Have a Chief Enthusiast- currently Adrian and Brad [but we need a couple more to help] who have volunteered to start this role.
- Could base Puchazc, LS4 and PNE in Matamata to encourage more training, cross country flying from Matamata and easy access to the Ridge. Only problem is limited hangerage in Matamata vs towing across from Tauranga.

Increase Club Activity and Efficiencies

The Committee proposes developing a structure plan of activity for the whole year in terms of keeping the existing membership involved and new members coming in. This would include:

- We need to develop a more fun and engaging culture at the club. With members wanting to call in for a beer and a chat after flying on Wednesdays or on the weekends. Start a “happy hour” from say 5.30pm on flying days. Free beer and sausages for an hour to generate interest. Perhaps invest in a gas fired pizza oven with the fridge stocked with ready to go pizzas. Have some background music available.
- The Club needs to have better first look impressions as these are often decisive in terms of future interest. The old lounge furniture is perhaps a reflection of our membership and attitude. To promote a better public appearance and actually promote more members to enjoy the club room environment, the old furniture should be removed and replaced with some outdoor furniture that could be moved onto a deck that would be expanded and a shade sail constructed over. It would be great to sit outside on a nice deck under shade on good gliding days and enjoy the facility. Maybe some would even look at the Club as a good hangout on flying days which is in itself a means of sharing the gliding experience. There is nothing better than a good look and feel to attract people back to a venue. It’s a bit like your favourite coffee bar or restaurant. It would be nice to see the Clubhouse versus aircraft have some priority. A good looking facility with comfortable amenities cannot but help promote membership. Could even have a decent coffee machine!!
- Make more of a feature of the simulator for members competition on certain tasks – have a challenge ladder. Also have it set up for people waiting for trail flights to be able to try their hand before or after flying.
- Develop a post solo cross country syllabus that gets members into cross country before they lose interest floating around the local circuit. We tend to spend too much energy attracting and training new members only to have most of them leave after being neglected post solo.
- Develop a better booking system for confirming flying on any given day or weekend. If no one has shown interest to fly on any day before 10am, then the instructor of the day can cancel the day. This is to stop wasting people’s time hanging around setting up and then no one showing. This will also encourage members to plan around other commitments and to commit to their flying. The CFI will have the discretion to fine tune the booking system to maximise club efficiencies. Therefore changes to start times to avoid wasting rostered members' time – new start times are as follows:
 - Wednesdays – 1.00pm
 - Saturdays and Sundays – 11.00am
- Work in with the seasons better and alter operations to suit and be more efficient as a club operationally:
 - For beginning of season shoulder (1 September to October):
 - Emphasis on training and lifting currency (eg landing competition, BFR and AFRs)
 - Encourage member to achieve ratings on different aircraft

- New member drive and formalised “night course” lectures to create activity at the start of the season
- Lectures and encouraging new students and instructors to advance in their training
- BBQs, AGM, start of season briefing (re-bonding the club), maximising flying time, extended flying day hours, encouraging cross country flying and coaching
- From November to March we should be focused on :
 - organised events, away trips and local challenges - one regular weekend per month to be all flying at Matamata/Taupo/Thames or elsewhere fun
 - encourage participation in competitions – Central Plateau, Regionals, Nationals etc
 - encourage members to plan cross country flights on favourable days
 - possibility of two instructors rostered on for busy periods (like February) at discretion of CFI
 - maximising activity at the club
 - minimising maintenance works and non-flying activities
- April to end of June – we should be focusing on:-
 - single instructor on
 - shorter day flying periods
 - maybe one day on the weekend or only flying subject to the weather
- July and August - we should focus on:-
 - Reduced club activities at the discretion of the CFI and member demand. Roster only completed on voluntary basis. If no one volunteers, then we don't fly. Only fly if individual members want to organise something amongst themselves eg. on a good wave day
 - Schedule major maintenance and overhaul of our fleet (particularly tow planes), undertake annual inspections of gliders
 - any major changes to our facilities to be undertaken (eg. construction or maintenance of clubrooms or hangar)
 - working bees – cleaning the hanger, gliders etc getting ready for the new flying season
- Conduct night school over the quieter winter months to have participants ready for new soaring season in September.

Fleet Rationalisation

We need to continue to shift our focus in order to:-

- Make the club more relevant to the needs of our current members by giving greater emphasis to more advanced or cross country flying. Cross country pilots generally stay longer and are more involved in the club
- Reduce the size of our fleet and not maintain a fleet that exceeds our requirements and the number of active pilots that we actually have (only 15 or so)
- Update and renew our fleet, not patching up our old fleet
- Encourage advanced flying members to stay within the club rather than becoming private owners.

Guiding principles for fleet selection

- Motorised self-launching or sustainer gliders will permit more independent operations out of Tauranga as can easily transit out of the control zone and can hold if required for departing IFR traffic. The requirements for our fleet are different to that of any other club operation.
- Gliders preferably from the same manufacturer / stable of gliders so that transition from one to the other is seamless, standard instrumentation, simplified maintenance, flexible features to cover the whole spectrum of gliding operations from training, ab initio, to cross country and competitions.
- Parts, batteries, wing tips, trailers and accessories all then become interchangeable saving cost and increasing flexibility and usage.

The committee discussed fleet rationalisation and has decided to promote the following:

Aircraft to keep:

- Duo Discus (XT) – this is a versatile aircraft for training, advanced cross country and competition, and more pilots should be encouraged to use it more often. Competent pilots should be encouraged to upskill and achieve a rating for this aircraft. It is a relatively easy glider to fly. This should be the first glider out of the hangar on most flying days. Keep this aircraft now for but see possible replacement with a new DG1001M – see below (aircraft to buy).
- Lak 17b 18m (FES) – this is a fantastic new aircraft, easy to fly with flexible and safe FES electric engine which should entice members to stretch their legs and to enjoy cross country flights out of Tauranga, and also encourage more members to enter competitions with the added safety of self-retrieves and reduced risk of landouts.
- Taurus – self launching aircraft for 7 day a week operation for local sightseeing and cross country flights. Fun side by side flying – great for taking friends and family for a local joy flight. More members should be encouraged to get a rating for this aircraft. A priority is needed to get this aircraft operational, and keep it this way. But its not an ideal club aircraft and should be replaced in the near future.
- Tow Plane – BKJ our best tow plane currently.

Aircraft to sell:

- Puchatz (GPZ) – this is old, rattly and expensive to maintain. It is past its use by date and needs to be replaced with a more modern 2 seat trainer.
- LS4 (GKM) - retain in short term subject to the acquisition of suitable replacement. Encourage cross country and club class competition flying. But suspect this aircraft won't get a lot of use now we have the LAK. This aircraft should be replaced with light weight ab initio single seater (see below – aircraft to buy).
- 1 Tow Plane – PNE. Retain for now, but look to replace this with a more powerful, composite light weight towplane. We have found many times in the past that there are significant advantages to maintaining a 2 tow plane fleet. Provides back up should BKJ require servicing, and is a source of income to the club on rent to other clubs, and towing for competitions. Could look to sell off shares in this to Piako and/or Taupo but club retains use of it in case of BKJ breakdown.

As a sale of these aircraft could take some time, they could be relocated to Matamata in the meantime to test the demand from members or could be leased to Piako Gliding Club/Rotorua Gliding Club to earn more revenue for the club.

Aircraft to buy:

- 1st priority – versatile motorised 2 seat trainer/ab initio cross country aircraft to replace the Puchacz. DG1001FES (17.2m/18m/20m) is the aircraft recommended for this purpose. Advantages of this aircraft are:
 - Has very versatile wing configurations:
 - 20m - is for cross country soaring and competition purposes.
 - 18m - is principally designed for instructional purposes.
 - 17.2m - facilitates high agility around the longitudinal axis for aerobatics.
 - The DG-1001T combines well-balanced flight characteristics and excellent soaring performance with the convenience of electric FES operation identical to the LAK.
 - Electrically operated under carriage (undercarriage configuration can be the same as the Duo with nose wheel for training purposes).
 - Electric engines have less complication and stress for low time pilots.
 - Gives much more flexibility for operations in controlled airspace.

The Puchacz would be sold to help finance the acquisition of this aircraft.

- 2nd priority - self launching high performance 2 seater capable of anytime/anywhere training/cross country flying opportunities without the restriction for a tow plane. DG1001M is the aircraft recommended for this purpose. Advantages of this aircraft are:

- Exactly same features as FES model above but in 20m wing configuration makes easy transition from trainer to specific self-launching cross country machine and competitions.
- But ability to share 18m interchangeable wing tips from FES model for training on event of tow plane breakdown.
- Powered by 70hp SOLO 2625-02i fuel injected water cooled engine. It is light weight, with double ignition and high reliability. It runs smoothly at any RPM setting, particularly in the cruise for longer distances. Easily relocatable to Matamata, Raglan or Taupo for club away weekends.
- Climbs at more than 3m/s with a ground run of 250m. Can self -taxi and launch off 07 without the aid of a wing runner if need be.
- Rubber engine mounts with modest noise to keep our neighbours happy.
- 40l fuel tank gives higher than average range for powered flight.

The Duo Discus would be sold to help finance the acquisition of this aircraft. While the Duo is a favourite glider for some, having 2 two seaters from the same stable with common features, controls and instrumentation makes it much easier and safer for transition from one glider to the other. This is a much better and safer combination for Club operations.

Now that the shops are fully tenanted again, the club has the financial resources to acquire both of these DG gliders at the same time subject to achieving the simultaneous sale of the Duo Discus. This would save on shipping and handling charges etc. The Duo would not be sold until the new DG to replace it is available to fly for members.

- 3rd priority – Mini Lak FES (light weight 13.5m glider). This is simply a smaller lighter version of the Lak 17b. But this is a self-launching single seat aircraft for low time pilots for ab initio cross country operations and competitions. Electric FES motor gives very simple and reliable operations for competent low hour cross country pilots and ability to move around control zone on request without having to end flight prematurely. Batteries would be interchangeable with the LAK 17b giving more launches on any given day if the LAK17b was not being used.

The LS4 would be sold to help finance the acquisition of this aircraft.

- 4th priority – powerful modern composite tow plane with reliable low cost operations. Needs to be able to tow 2 seat gliders safely off 04 so gliding operations are not restricted. This would then allow the sale of PNE. Type of tow plane not yet determined. BKJ would become the backup tow plane.

These aircraft could be bought second hand, not new, to reduce capital cost, if available. But otherwise the club has the financial ability to acquire these new taking on board the normal teething problems associated with new aircraft.

The sale and purchase of aircraft requires member approval in general meeting. Once members formally approve this strategic plan, the committee will then have the authority to sell and buy the above aircraft as per above, so they can be seriously marketed for sale without having to go back to the members for approval to sell. Its difficult to make decisions and to plan for the future when having to make decisions on an ad hoc basis.

It is proposed that approval for the sale of GPZ, GKM and PNE, and the purchase of 2 new double seaters and the miniLAK to be given at the AGM to approve this strategic plan. Any approval for the sale and purchase of different or other aircraft will be the subject of a separate meeting at a later date.

Medium to long term issues

Relocation of the Club to alternative location

It is prudent to have a contingency plan in place to relocate to an alternative field if available, either wholly or partially, at some point in time in the future in case relocation is forced on us eventually by some event or organisation beyond our influence and we should therefore be better positioned to manage the process and reduce our risks.

As an interim measure, discussions with Piako should be started to include, but not limited to:-

- Possible sharing or rationalising club assets and structure
- Partial relocation - splitting the club into more training in Matamata was one of the suggestions and logistics need to be considered.
- Hanger, organisation, resources, programme.
- Fleet review and rationalisation of aircraft over both sites
- If partial or whole relocation is desirable, to develop a plan in the longer term to deal with this

However, at this time, the over whelming majority of the Committee agree that we should remain based in Tauranga for the foreseeable future but look to increase levels of activity at Matamata over time. This will be under review as circumstances change in the longer term (for example, if airspace changes restrict operations in a material way), but the decision should not be reviewed again until circumstances do change, to give some certainty of direction for the Club and its members.

Pursuant to the Constitution, the assets of the club are required to be domiciled in the Western Bay of Plenty, and if the Club was ever to be wound up, the assets would be held in trust by GNZ to start gliding operations somewhere else in the Western Bay of Plenty. A wholesale relocation of the club would not be permitted by the Constitution as it currently stands. The acquisition and disposal of improvements and land need approval by the members in general meeting.

The following activities can still be undertaken without changing the Constitution however:

- Increased operations from Matamata or elsewhere on away trips;
- Relocation of some of the fleet to Matamata in leased hanger space for club use for training or cross country flying;
- Greater integration with Piako Gliding Club operations in Matamata via the sharing of facilities and aircraft (for example, we could lease or rent GKM, GPZ and/or PNE for shared club use out of Matamata which makes the aircraft available for club use but its use would derive extra income for the club).

Airspace Restrictions

The new airspace restrictions at Tauranga have now been introduced and have had a lower impact on gliding operations than first thought. While not perfect for training purposes, with some flights having to be stopped prematurely to make way for IFR traffic, getting clearance for airspace on tow is actually a benefit to cross country flying as we can then fly in any direction outside of local traffic movements. So the club for the foreseeable future will be able to operate quite well in these new airspace conditions.

Review of investments including diversification of shops

The shops continue to be a fantastic investment for the club. The committee has reviewed the club's investment in its shops and believes no change should be undertaken at this time. The committee has decided to put the current shop loan onto a P&I basis to pay the shop loan down slowly over a 30 year term which is prudent to do. Any proposed sale of land would require members approval at a later date.

Management Priorities

Develop a simple one page spreadsheet (that can be generated easily by integration with the club's financial statements) containing critical key information and KPIs that summarises what is important to our club and best indicates its health or otherwise. Trends need to be monitored regularly, discussed and acted upon if adverse to the activity levels of the Club.

Suggested KPIs:

- How many active members do we have. A breakdown of:
 - how many are flying “glider” members and how many are non “glider” flying members
 - how many are private members
 - how many are youth members
- Total hours and total launches for each of our aircraft.
- Flying revenue total and breakdown into:
 - total subs revenue
 - trial flight revenue
 - glider revenue
 - tow plane revenue
 - other flying revenue
- Number of flying days per month and year, and noting any significant weather or other events which explain any anomalies in normal operating activities ie wet winter or tow plane out of action etc
- Flying expenses,
 - glider flying and maintenance costs
 - towing and maintenance costs
 - administration costs
 - clubroom and hanger building expenses (not commercial shops)
- Commercial shops revenue and costs.
 - total actual revenue
 - total expenses
 - actual return on investment
- A summary of our key charges
 - Membership fees
 - Trial flight charges
 - Rate per minute per aircraft type
 - Tow rate per minute per aircraft type
- Extraordinary events, eg. sale of aircraft, major purchases, any significant events for the club in that year.

We need accurate data collection so that we have meaningful information from which to make good decisions. Members need to be educated to ensure that daily flight sheets are filled out correctly and that the correct information is being captured.