



2023
Annual Report
and Yearbook

APF

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Message from the Chair

Trevor Collins

2023 has seen a relative return to jumping normality following the COVID years. The incoming tourism numbers are still emerging but still well below pre COVID statistics.

The Board welcomed three new members Karen Fuller NQ, Dale Findlay SQ and Mick Connolly WA, the Board also farewelled two members, Zai Pieper and Anna van der Vlugt, whose terms expired in May. Both provided valuable service to the organisation in a voluntary capacity.

Engaging with CASA and Airservices is always a continuing and challenging discussion for APF.

The Board thanked Richard McCooey for his commitment to the APF in the form of STM and CEO over the past 10 years.

Stephen Porter commenced as CEO in November, and we look forward to his contribution to APF, building on his prior experience in Defence and other NFPs.

The Board has put in place the Strategic Plan 2023 -2026 to be reviewed annually. The core components are:

- Education, Safety, Training and Risk Management
- Sport and Member Development
- Member Services

Key Issues Going Forward

Financial strength and resilience

The fact that APF survived Covid without needing external bailouts like some sports, was not a matter of luck. It was due to careful management of resources and some hard decisions. We have learned from the experience and part of the learning is that it is impossible to predict the future. All we know is that we need to be prepared for the years ahead. That means that we must have a solid asset base. Of course, Area Councils are part of the big picture now, and they need to be in a position to use funds strategically to help accomplish APF aims and objectives. In some cases, this may mean a change from past practice.

Insurance and insurability

In November 2023 we were pleased to secure another year of public liability insurance at a fair price. Being able to obtain this necessary insurance should not be taken for granted, and it would be a disaster for the sport if we couldn't obtain it. Prospective insurers put us under the microscope and it is important that we all take every step we can to minimise risk to our members, our operators, and the public. This need will always be with us.

Access to airspace

Access to airspace will remain an ongoing challenge and when an operator is faced with these issues, APF must step up and do what we can to reach a resolution. Of course, we don't generally fly through controlled airspace like transport providers, but we tend to go up and down within it. This creates challenges for both APF and Air Traffic Control. This was a huge issue in 2023 and will likely continue.

CASA compliance

We are an Aviation Self Administering Organisation under CASA part 149. We needed to undertake additional work during 2023 to maintain this status. APF do not see compliance as optional. CASA has put a number of our policies and practices under their microscope. This is not a "set and forget" exercise and we are continuing the efforts to achieve full compliance in consultation with CASA.

ASIC compliance

APF Ltd is now a Company Limited by Guarantee and that requires ASIC Compliance. We take steps to ensure that all Directors are properly registered and qualify under the Act. Directors have legal responsibilities to carry out. We foresee additional compliance requirements needing to be met in the future.

Management and governance stability including succession planning

We can report that in November there was a very smooth transition of Chief Executive Officer and we thank both Richard and Stephen for putting the members and APF first in this exercise. Richard is still associated with APF in a different role and the early evidence is that this is working very well.

The Director term is three years (on a rotating system) which has provided continuity and the opportunity for new voices to be heard. The electoral process brought us three new elected directors in 2023 to join the four existing elected directors. To improve the quality of governance, all elected directors will be required to undertake formal training at APF expense. This has already shown positive results. Going forward, we will continue to need qualified and willing independent volunteers to serve on the APF Board. This is important for the ongoing health and development of the organisation.

Fossil fuel and threats from changing environmental community views

The reality is, this is a sport that relies on burning fossil fuel and releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The cost of these fuels directly impacts jump costs. There are some wonderful initiatives in place such as Skydive Geronimo's. At present we can't usually jump out of carbon neutral aircraft so group member initiatives should be supported where they exist.

IT

APF will need to spend some serious money in the coming years to develop an IT infrastructure that the members expect and deserve. In 2023 it is clear that we are not yet where we want to be. This will go well beyond a simple website refresh. We need to reduce physical handling and, where possible, permit members to complete a transaction outside of office hours in more cases than we have at present. This will be a major project overseen by the CEO.

Competition

For the large majority of members, skydiving is an enjoyable pastime and they seek to excel in their chosen discipline. For others, it involves competition. Both types of member need to be catered for. Feedback was received during 2023 that we need to continue to fine tune the competition option for the members who wish to participate. This needs to be done in the interests of all members, not just the competitors. The feedback has been heard and this has been marked for action going forward. We gained much valuable and valid data from the 2023 member survey and this helps shape our **future** direction.

What Has Changed From Past Practice

- Seven Company Directors now with national responsibilities elected by members.
- The board no longer has a role in managing member misconduct.
- The board is not involved in day-to-day management of APF.
- Directors do not represent states or area councils.
- Matters like Nationals, competition management etc are operational matters, and are handled by Management.
- Directors are now required to have formal qualifications to carry out their role.

In closing I would like to thank all our passionate and dedicated committee volunteers, Council committees, National Officers and staff for their ongoing commitment to the APF.



Message from the CEO

Richard McCooey

As part of a periodic data security and recovery review, it was confirmed APF's membership system code and member records were backed up by our provider. Although reasonable, a separate nightly back up of this critical data to our own secure server was thought best practice. This is now in place, the cost of \$6,000 pa is a necessary part of protecting this personal and critical data.

Random drug testing continued during 2023. APF conduct such testing, particularly focussing on Tandem Masters and Packers. This is in conjunction with regular CASA testing as well as testing conducted by operators. Like the use of SPRs and AADs before, APF are proud to have driven significant cultural changes that will improve long term safety outcomes.

An injury claim for approximately \$800,000 against Australian Skydive Torquay was sent to trial in 2022. The result of this trial was released this year which dismissed all claims against Australian Skydive and their staff. APF defended this claim for our members at substantial cost. Winning at trial against Slater & Gordon is an important deterrent.

The ongoing judges dispute made running some Nationals events challenging. Having said that, the move to online judging was implemented and has proven successful. By the end of the year the judges dispute was resolved which resulted in the appointment of a new Nationals Judging Officer (NJO) and National Competition Officer (NCO). This will shift the focus away from judging and back to competition for future events.

APF recommenced the delivery of Tandem Canopy Courses this year. The last series of these courses delivered by Jules McConnel resulted in a noticeable reduction in landing injuries. These courses are funded by APF and are delivered at no cost to Tandem Masters who want to review and improve their landing techniques.

The APF Blog was launched this year. Lucy Clacher (Blog@apf.com.au) has researched and authored/edited a broad range of content, available to members on our website. As this is further populated, it will continue to be an excellent source of information to members of all levels. It will also offer more up to date information than traditional printed content. As is always the case, we seek further written and pictorial input from DZs and event organisers.

Early in the year APF appointed Wade Challenor to the new position of Operations Manager. This was a strategic decision to ensure an experienced skydiver was in place to support a new CEO once appointed later in the year.

During COVID we ran various online conferences as we were unable to host our traditional Instructor Conferences. It was exciting for APF to recommence face to face conferences this year. APF hosted a 1-day conference in Brisbane during which 70 people were able to hear presentations on programs and safety as well as for members to have the chance to discuss issues important to them. The social aspects of these gatherings are also extremely beneficial.

2023 saw the introduction of Personal Accident Insurance (PAI) included in student membership. This was a bold move but of huge benefit to members. Offering support for students who may be injured in their early training is very important to APF.

It is interesting to note, none of our members were served any injury claims this year. We will continue to strive to reduce injuries and when students are injured, ensure they are well supported.

Group Members were significantly affected by issues at AirServices Australia this year. A significant shortage of Air Traffic Controllers due to staffing decisions and a significant sickness rate, meant large sections of air space were not available for clearance. APF met with AirServices management during the year to seek better air space access, particularly for the most affected regions NSW, SA and Qld. The problem has improved however Air Services appears to have ongoing management challenges.

Our recent IT accomplishments showcase a heightened focus on data security, with enhanced measures fortifying our APIs to ensure the integrity of member data. Simultaneously, we've upgraded our payment gateway to Commonwealth Bank, a strategic move aimed at reducing payment errors and fostering a more reliable payment system.

The implementation of DZ Permissions now allows us to meticulously track informal and club-level approvals which were previously logged manually into paper logbooks. This ensures information sharing across dropzones and increased safety of operations. To bolster our analytical capabilities, the successful integration of PowerBI Reporting for internal reports production accelerates data analysis, providing quick and informed decision-making.

CASA released Part 105 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations in December. This followed several years of engagement with APF over the content of these operational rules. CASA considered some of our submissions however appeared to rush the final phase and did not address all content to our satisfaction.

After several very tough years, student revenues have started getting back to some normality. Despite the APF budget expecting a loss, 2023 ended with a small profit.

If you shy away from the difficult decisions, you shy away from opportunities to make a real difference. As I leave the role of CEO, I look back on two tough decisions of which I am proudest; lifting the minimum age of tandems to 16 and requiring First Aid qualifications for all DZSOs.

I see a bright future for the APF although not without challenges. Complacency, regulation simplification and IT improvements are just some of the issues the new CEO will already be contemplating.

Change is essential to ensure survival. The world is changing, an organisation has to change with it, just ask Holden, Kodak or Nokia!



The Gold Coast Skydive Display Team at the 2023 Pacific Airshow at Surfers Paradise Photo by Archie Jamieson.



The Gold Coast Skydive Display Team at the 2023 Pacific Airshow at Surfers Paradise Photo by Archie Jamieson

Organisation Overview

About Us

The Australian Parachute Federation (APF) operates as an Approved Self-Administering Aviation Organisation (ASAO), a status that grants it autonomy in governing parachuting within Australia. Under the oversight of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), the APF is responsible for setting and maintaining safety standards for all aspects of parachuting. This includes issuing licenses to skydivers, accrediting parachute instructors, overseeing drop zone operations, and conducting regular safety audits and training programs. The APF plays a crucial role in advocating for the interests of its members, ensuring that skydiving continues to be a safe and accessible sport.

Over the years, the APF has built a community of skydiving enthusiasts, ranging from weekend sports parachutists to skydivers who compete internationally. The Federation actively works to promote the sport through a variety of programs aimed at both novice and experienced skydivers.

Mission Statement

The APF mission is to set professional standards, serve our membership, and enable safe enjoyable skydiving for all, consistent with our values.

Values

The Australian Parachute Federation (APF) upholds a set of core values that guide its operations and interactions within the parachuting, and broader Australian community. **Safety** is paramount, the APF is dedicated to maintaining the highest safety standards to protect all participants in the sport. **Fun** is central to the APF's ethos, and essential to enriching the overall experience for all skydivers. **Inclusivity** is a key value as the APF strives to make parachuting accessible and enjoyable for a diverse range of participants and fostering a welcoming environment for all. **Innovation** is critical to ensure the APF is continually embracing new technologies and methods to advance the safety and enjoyment of parachuting. **Achievement** is embraced and we applaud the accomplishment of our members. **Fairness**, in ensuring that all participants, regardless of their level or background, are given equal opportunities to achieve their personal best, and enjoy the sport. **Respect**, advocating for mutual consideration among all members, and recognising diverse perspectives and experiences, develops our community. **Environmental sustainability**, actively promoting practices that minimize the ecological impact of parachuting activities to preserve the natural environments.

Our Vision

To be a world-leading inclusive community of engaged skydivers who share their passion for the sport through development, coaching, mentorship and mateship.

Strategic Priorities

The APF has outlined several strategic priorities aimed at advancing the sport of parachuting and enhancing member experiences. First among these is the commitment to safety and developing a culture of training and education rather than regulation.

The APF places a strong emphasis on sports and member development, integrating comprehensive training programs with competitive opportunities to elevate the overall standards and experience of its members. This dual approach focuses not only on enhancing individual skillsets but also on fostering a robust, competitive spirit within the parachuting community.

The APF provides an array of member services designed to enhance the experience and support the needs of its diverse community. These services are fundamental to ensuring that members receive the support necessary to participate safely and enjoyably in the sport. Among these services is comprehensive insurance coverage, certified training programs and educational resources, and a robust certification system that recognises the qualifications of skydivers and instructors.

Governance

The APF is governed by a Board of Directors, which play a critical role in shaping the strategic direction and ensuring the operational integrity of the organization. The Board is responsible for setting the APF's policies, managing its financial health, and overseeing the implementation of its strategic priorities. They work to maintain the highest standards of governance and transparency, essential for fostering trust within the parachuting community and among external stakeholders. In addition to their governance roles, the Board also engages with the broader skydiving community through regular communication and by attending events and meetings.

Membership

Membership in the APF is open to individuals, and group members (clubs). Members foster a sense of community that keeps skydiving safe and organised and connects them with a network of peers and professionals who share a commitment to skydiving.

The Future

In the coming year the APF plans to launch several new initiatives aimed at achieving our strategic priorities. These include improving information technology, focusing on continual improvement in safety and training, optimising participation whilst having fun and learning new skills and protecting the right and opportunity to skydive in Australia.



BURN Perspective camp at Skydive Great Ocean Road. Photo by Tommy Siera



BURN Perspective camp at Skydive Jurien Bay. Photo by Tommy Siera



Cay Boogie, Far North Freefall. photo by Cameron Puttee



WA State Record, SOS (Skydivers-Over-Sixty), 11 way Formation. Set 5 Feb 2023 at Skydive Jurien Bay. Photo by Adam Fiannaca



What the Flock camp at Skydive Jurien Bay. Photo by Cameron Puttee

Bigways on the Beach, Far North Freefall, Photo by Michael Young



year in review.

Sport Development

by Brigitte Jones

Funding model

In 2023, the APF implemented a new funding model aimed at fostering fairness and inclusivity across all disciplines. The primary objective of this initiative was to streamline the application process for event organizers, thereby encouraging broader participation in seeking funding through the APF.

A lower percentage was allocated for funding to previous years at 11% of event costs. This ensured that there was an equitable distribution, enabling the APF to support a greater number of events irrespective of their scale. This led to an increase in applications with more events receiving funding from the APF, with only a minimal number being placed on a wait list.

This underscores the APF's commitment to promoting inclusivity and fairness, a core principle that was considered in the design and implementation of the new funding model and links into the values outlined in the strategic plan.

Events

The APF backed an impressive 42 events that spanned various disciplines including boogies and weekend camps. Among these, Jyro Boogie stood out as a monumental gathering, boasting a turnout of 140 participants and an exceptional participant-to-coach ratio.

The BURN team spearheaded numerous events across Australia in 2023, a trend they intend to continue throughout 2024. Meanwhile Far North Freefall hosted their annual duo of boogies with many crests and licenses signed off and featured a number of smaller events throughout the year.

Kristina Hicks orchestrated the Australian Women's record event, smashing the record for the largest formation sequential on May 6th. With Kristina at the helm again in 2024, hopes are high for another record breaking year. Another highlight included the eagerly anticipated return of the Big Ways on the Beach, touching down on Mission Beach.

Throughout the year, the APF supported monthly weekend events such as Belly Bash and TSC Star Crest Days. These events encouraged skydivers of all skill levels to take part, fostering skill, development and inclusivity within the sport.

Canopy events also received backing from the APF such as Kapow Kup and many flocking events such as Zack Rosser's What the Flock and Let's Flock Sh!t Up, providing valuable learning opportunities and team building. Shane Turner organised speed skydiving events that catered to beginners in the discipline right through to advanced, recruiting international coach Marco Hepp.



While the events mentioned above represent a fraction of those supported by the APF, it's challenging to enumerate every single one, considering the monumental dedication and accomplishments of both event organisers and participants. The diverse spectrum of funded events reflects the APF's commitment to cultivating a world-class, inclusive skydiving community.

We look forward to 2024 and the continuation of supporting events that benefit the members and advance the sport in terms of education, safety and enjoyment.



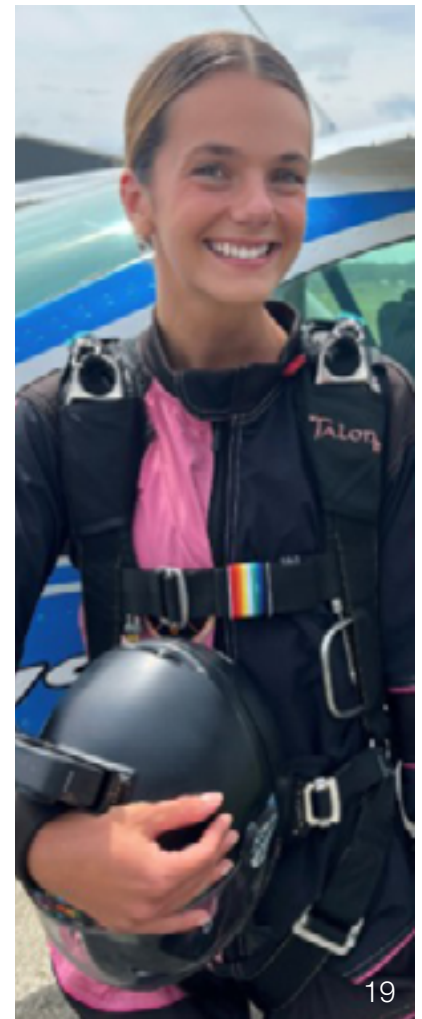
Lisa Perdichizzi Scholarship

The Lisa Perdichizzi Scholarship serves to empower women in skydiving by facilitating upskilling, training, and leadership development opportunities. The scholarship received an impressive array of deserving applications, all aimed at enhancing female retention and advancement in the sport.

A diverse panel of volunteers dedicated their time to meticulously evaluate the submissions, considering adherence to criteria and potential outcomes. After careful deliberation, Harriette Flemming emerged as the worthy recipient.

Harriette's proposal demonstrated a keen focus on early intervention in the sport, extending support beyond the AFF stages. She outlined strategies for fostering a supportive culture at drop zones and promoting equal opportunities in coaching, competition, and leadership roles. Harriette aptly highlighted the symbiotic relationship between individual growth and the overall development of the sport.

The APF eagerly anticipates witnessing Harriette's endeavours with this scholarship and takes pride in offering its support.



Judging

by Sandy Nieuwenhoven

In January 2023 Craig Vaughan was appointed as National Judging Officer for the APF, however due to his other commitments he was unable to continue the role and Sandy Nieuwenhoven took over from November.

Being selected as an FAI judge at a category 1 event (World Championships, World Cup or World games) is a big achievement, in 2023 Jan Nejedly was selected for the 11th FAI World Cup of Canopy Piloting and 2nd FAI World Cup of Freestyle Canopy Piloting at Eloy Arizona. Jan is utilising his rating to train 7 more APF judges in Canopy Piloting in 2024.

Sandy Nieuwenhoven received her FAI Formation Skydiving rating after attending a judging course in Norway and was supported by the APF.

2023 was an exciting year for competition with good numbers of competitors, however with fewer judges available than previous years the APF utilised judges from the USA and Canada to assist with remote judging for freefall events in state and national competitions in addition to our own APF judges.

APF judges were provided for Nagambie's final hurrah (2023 Freefall Nationals), Canopy Piloting Nationals at Sydney Skydivers, Picton, and Accuracy Landing Nationals at Gold Rush Skydivers, Rainbow Beach. In addition, all state meets were supported by local and international judges.

Intime online software designed by Namespace Technologies was used for Formation Skydiving judging and also manual upload of Canopy Formation, Accuracy Landing and Canopy Piloting, competition results for 2023 can be found here <https://www.intimescoring.com>

Skyderby software designed by Aleksandr Kunin was used for wingsuit and speed competitions. Users are able to donate to the web designer if they wish. Results for 2023 competitions can be found here <https://skyderby.ru/events>

For 2024, I have been working on increasing the number of judges in Australia and running more judging courses. Watch the APF eNews for more training dates.



Canopy Formation

by Martin Letch

Various coaches from around the country including Jules, Coops, and the boys from Line Burns held various canopy formation events throughout 2023. Events included a big way camp in Tully, parabatics in Lower Light, along with novice and competition coaching in Moruya and Lower Light, and a few Canopy Formation display jumps too. Returning fresh from their escapades in Arizona, at the 2022 World Championships, the boys from Line Burns continued training throughout 2023 in hopes of representing Australia at the next World Championships in the Czech Republic.



“

looking forward to more events and coaching through 2024/25

”

Speed Skydiving

by Natisha Dingle

Natisha Dingle, Merv O'Connell and Shane Turner represented Australia and brought home a gold medal in the team event from the world cup in Prague last August. They also managed to bring home four world records in the team event. Natisha won Gold in the womens division and broke five individual records in the same competition.

Shane Turner organised a camp before 2023 nationals with Marco Hepp, the current open World Champion. We had a great turn out and everyone left with some new tips to work with in their training.





The rules have changed this year and there is a new category, three jumps after the original eight rounds where a male and female compete together against the other countries. Each country can enter three teams. This was developed to encourage more participation at the world event and for the top level to encourage the up and coming. Each country can take ten people in the speed team where the last three are reserved for the minority.



The most attractive component to speed skydiving is the community that comes with it. Even at a world level everyone is encouraging and ultimately happy for everyone to achieve their own goals. If it's something that interests you please reach out to myself and we will work out a training plan to get you to your goals.





Accuracy Landing

by Mike Dyer

April 1st May 1st, National Championships

The highlight of the year was the first Nationals in 10 years on a beach setting and the first for a newly opened operation in my home town. The oldrush Skydivers run by Kristian Fischer promised us a Nationals to remember and he certainly delivered

Supported by the local council with a billboard on the highway, a free breakfast and free drinks on the Monday. The Shire Mayor came down and later reported that local businesses reported a spike in earnings and were keen to see us return

The visuals and the helicopter drinks were memorable and exciting

If you like the idea of representing your country and you enjoy competition, there is no better discipline as it is relatively straightforward with less aspects of the sport done at high speed, a slow, forgiving canopy and you can train by yourself. There are very few competitors doing it in Australia so the opportunities are there

You need three things

1st An accuracy canopy & container. There are a few good hand sets of gear at good prices

2nd A desire to progress in any aspect of this sport for which we all share a love

3rd A readiness to work to achieve









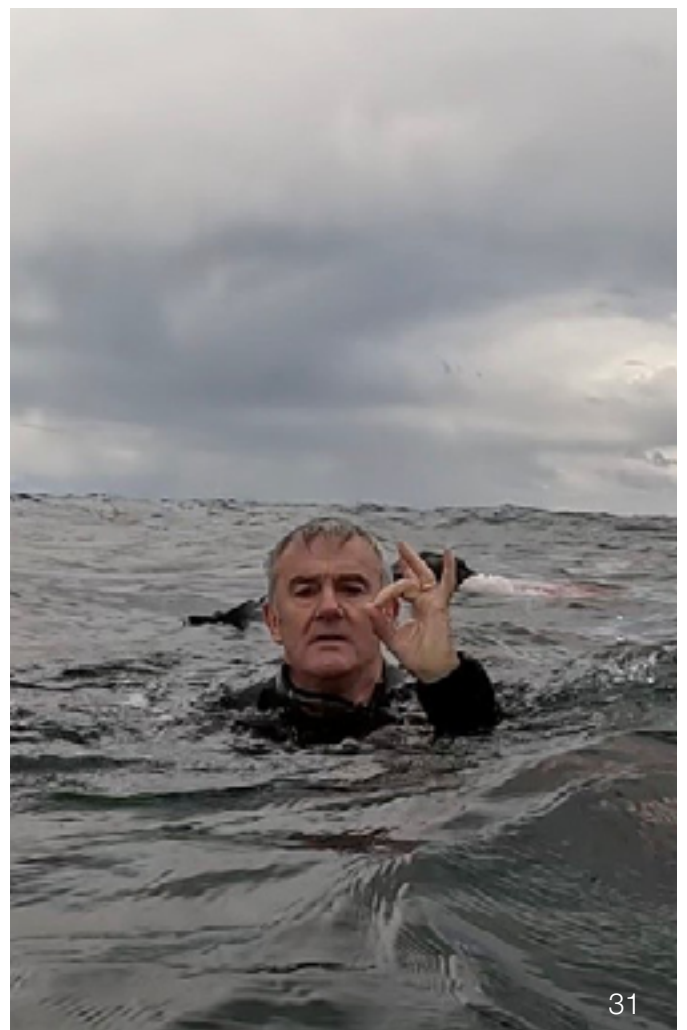
1st: Ben Dixon
2nd: Russel Blacklock
3rd: Seth Gilson



1st: Ben Dixon
2nd: Kal Fitzclarence
3rd: Shaun Hagen



1st: Tibor Glesk
2nd: Graeme Windsor
3rd: Kras Bankov





Bigways on the Beach, Far North Freefall, Photo by Michael Young.



Women's POPS Total Break Sequential World Record - 2 point 14 way. Set during Skysisters at Skydive Ramblers, Nov 2023. Photo by Steve Fitchett



Toogs New Years Boogie. Photo by Matt Smith



Smorgasboard, Skydive Port Macquarie. Photo by Cameron Puttee

Safety and Training

by Charl Rootman

Safety

Incidents

The incident statistics and trends generally continued to show the same patterns and trends as previous years, with a slight increase in landing incidents (specifically High-Performance landings) and wingsuit incidents (specifically non-deployment) and a slight increase in AAD activations. These trends were investigated with corrective programmes initiated. The percentages of incident types remained consistent with the historic trends.

Parachuting Fatalities

Sadly, 2023 had two fatal incidents in which two sports jumpers lost their lives. Our heartfelt thoughts and condolences to all those involved. These incidents, both involving High-Performance landings, were investigated and both are fully concluded. The aim is to determine how and why these accidents happened, what the contributing causes were, and how we can prevent similar accidents. Where possible, information was shared with members for the purpose of education and prevention. APF remains committed to proactively educate and guide members to reduce the likelihood of such tragic accidents happening.

Compliance and Regulatory

Following APF approval as a CASR Part 149 Approved Self-Administering Aviation Organisation (ASAO) in 2020, the Part 105 (Parachuting from Aircraft) Manual of Standards (MOS) came into force on 2 December 2023. Part 105, in conjunction with the MOS, replaces all previous CASA instruments which allowed for parachuting as an exempted activity. Senior APF officials worked closely with CASA over a lengthy period to ensure the MOS would be best suitable, which also required some adjustments in APF regulations and other publications.

On 1 April 2023, with the annual regulatory and manual updates, some regulatory changes were affected. Most were minor changes, with additions to APF guides, mainly to improve safety practices and training procedures, and in some cases to improve clarity.

Member Communication

In 2023 existing platforms for communication with, and education of, members were continued. This includes E-news, social media platforms, targeted communication to reach specific groups, and the monthly Incident Stats-and-Facts publication. APF is continuing to provide educational resources, articles and information to members through the mentioned channels, while also posting these on the Blog on the website.

APF hosted the first post-COVID face-to-face conference type event on 21 November 2023. This was a one-day event at the Springwood Towers Hotel in Brisbane, and featured presentations by both the outgoing (Richard McCooey) and incoming (Stephen Porter) CEOs, as well as APF Safety and Training Manger, Operations Manager and Chair of the Board, Trevor Collins. The event was well attended with just over 70 members present.

Training

It was encouraging to see a continuation of a high number of instructor level courses being conducted at clubs around Australia during 2023. New rating holders and instructors are critical to the future of skydiving as a sport and industry, and we look forward to seeing these members contribute to growing skydiving and mentoring students.

Training Resources

During 2023 more training and assessment processes and material has gone online to allow for smoother and more efficient processing. This is an ongoing process, with more work being planned for the next few years.

Inter-Agency Cooperation

APF has continued its good working relationships with other national parachuting associations, with regular online meetings of the safety managers of the APF, British Skydiving (BS), Unites States Parachute Association (USPA), the Canadian Sport Parachuting Association (CSPA) and the Belgian Parachute Association. Through sharing of information, knowledge and learning, we contribute to improving safety and training outcomes for all as the challenges we face are very similar. APF continues to make significant contributions in this forum.

In 2023 APF also renewed its consultative agreement with the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF), with APF technical and safety staff continuing to support skydiving in Fiji through a consultative approach.

Incident Statistics for 2023

Where do These Statistics Come From?

Incident notifications and aircraft incidents are lodged by APF clubs. Equipment Reports are lodged by Riggers/Packer A's. All reports are entered into the APF incident database under appropriate categories.



287,675
Jumps

236,940 in 2022



116,000
Tandem Jumps

85,664 in 2022



684
Incident Reports

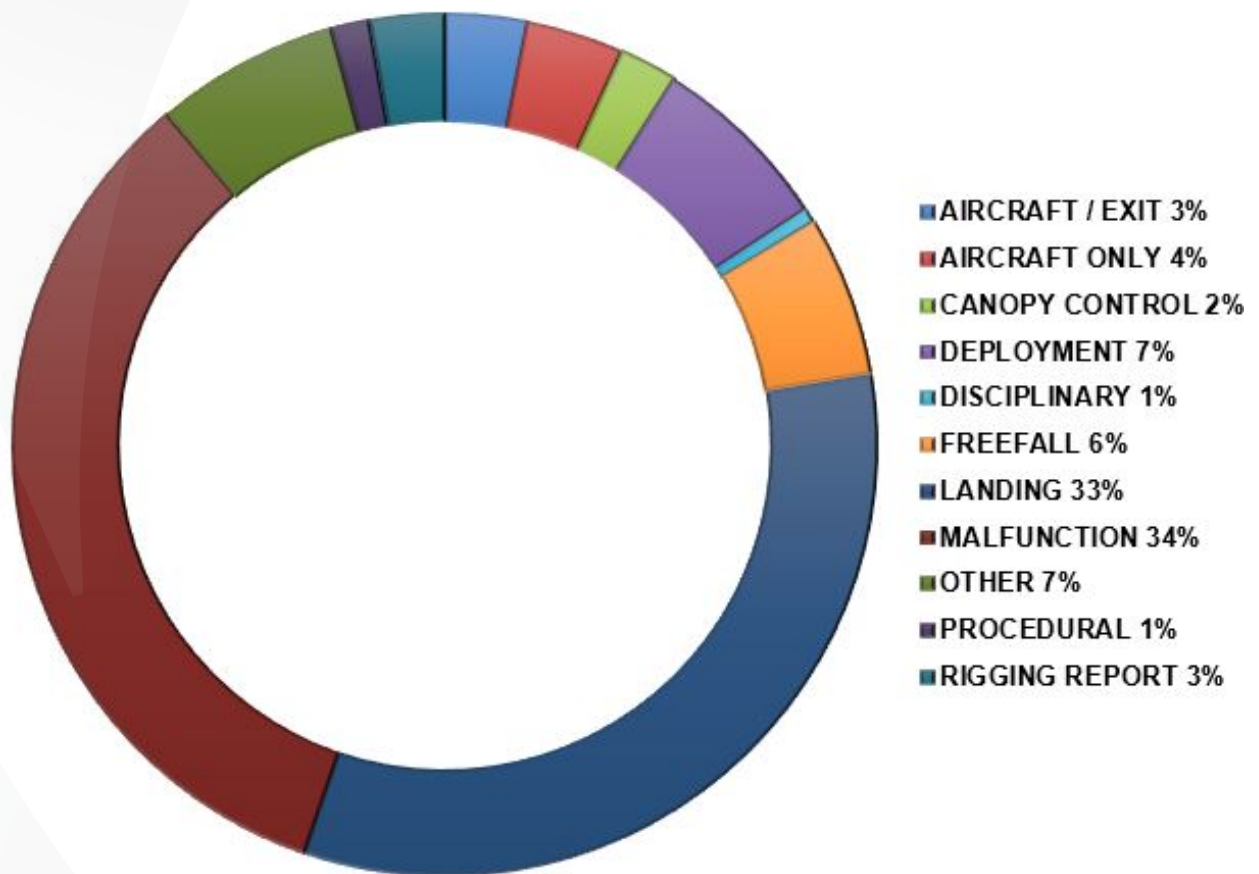
540 in 2022



171,675
Sport Jumps

151,276 in 2022

2023 Incident Categories



The combination of 'Malfunction' & 'Deployment' categories continue to make up a significant proportion (41%) of the total.

The combination of 'Landing' and 'Canopy Control' categories also continue to make up a significant proportion (35%) of the total. The percentages of each category are consistent with previous years.

Serious Injuries & Reserve Activations Per Discipline



532
First Jumps

25 Serious Injuries

10 Reserve Activations



116,000
Tandems

1 Serious Injury per 4143 jumps

1 Reserve Activation per 2026 jumps

Equipment reports: 2%
Aircraft only Reports: 3%



171,675
Sport Jumps

1 Serious Injury per 5538 jumps

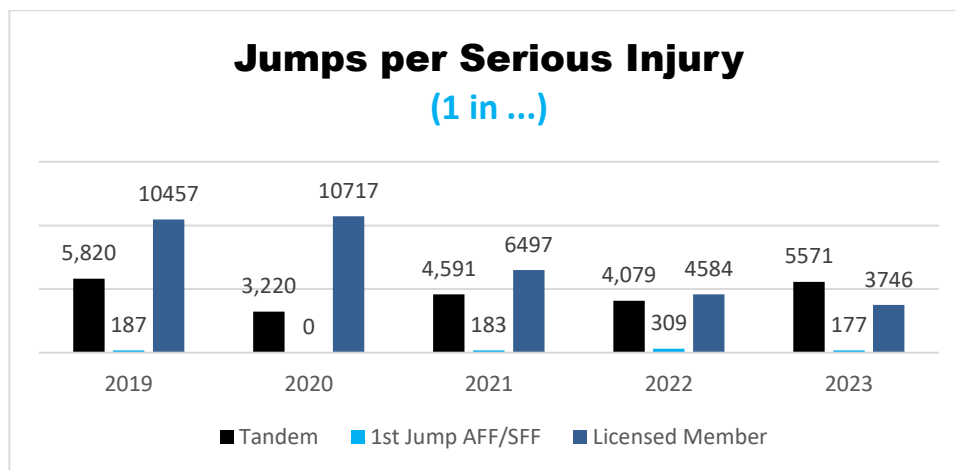
1 Reserve Activation per 970 jumps

Note: Serious injuries include broken bones, multiple severe injuries, and dislocations.

Serious Injuries & Reserve Activations Statistics

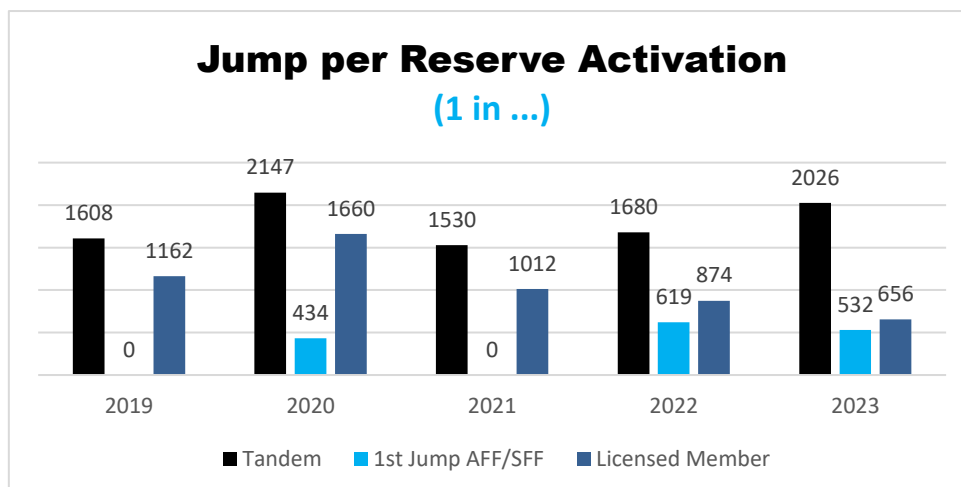
APF members reported 84 incidents resulting in serious injuries from an estimated 232,130 jumps, which equals **one serious injury every 2763 jumps**. This number has increased from 2022.

- Student serious injuries have increased
- Tandem serious injuries have decreased
- Certificated Member serious injuries have increased



APF members reported 264 reserve activations from an estimated 232,130 jumps, which equates to:

- One reserve activation every 1090 jumps.
- Certificated members reserve rides have increased.
- Tandem reserve rides have decreased
- Student reserve rides have decreased



Note - The APF only has data for number of Student (non-tandem) first jumps and not total number of Student jumps completed. Therefore, we do not have an accurate ratio of Student jumps per reserve activation or serious injury.

Fatality Statistics

2023 was an unfortunate year for the Australian skydiving community, with 2 fatalities. The Australian 10 year average up to 2023 is 2 fatalities per year. The five-year average shows one fatality per 270,866 jumps in Australia versus the world-wide five-year average of one fatality per 162,140 jumps.

Numbers of fatalities in Australia are deemed too small to derive meaningful statistical data from which causes and trends can be derived. Cause and trend analysis is best achieved by examining cases individually.

Date	Age	Certificate	Summary
16/04/23	52/Male	Cert F	High performance landing - Low turn from which the canopy did not recover.
03/12/23	46/Male	Cert E	High performance landing - over rotated and additional low toggle turn which the canopy did not recover.







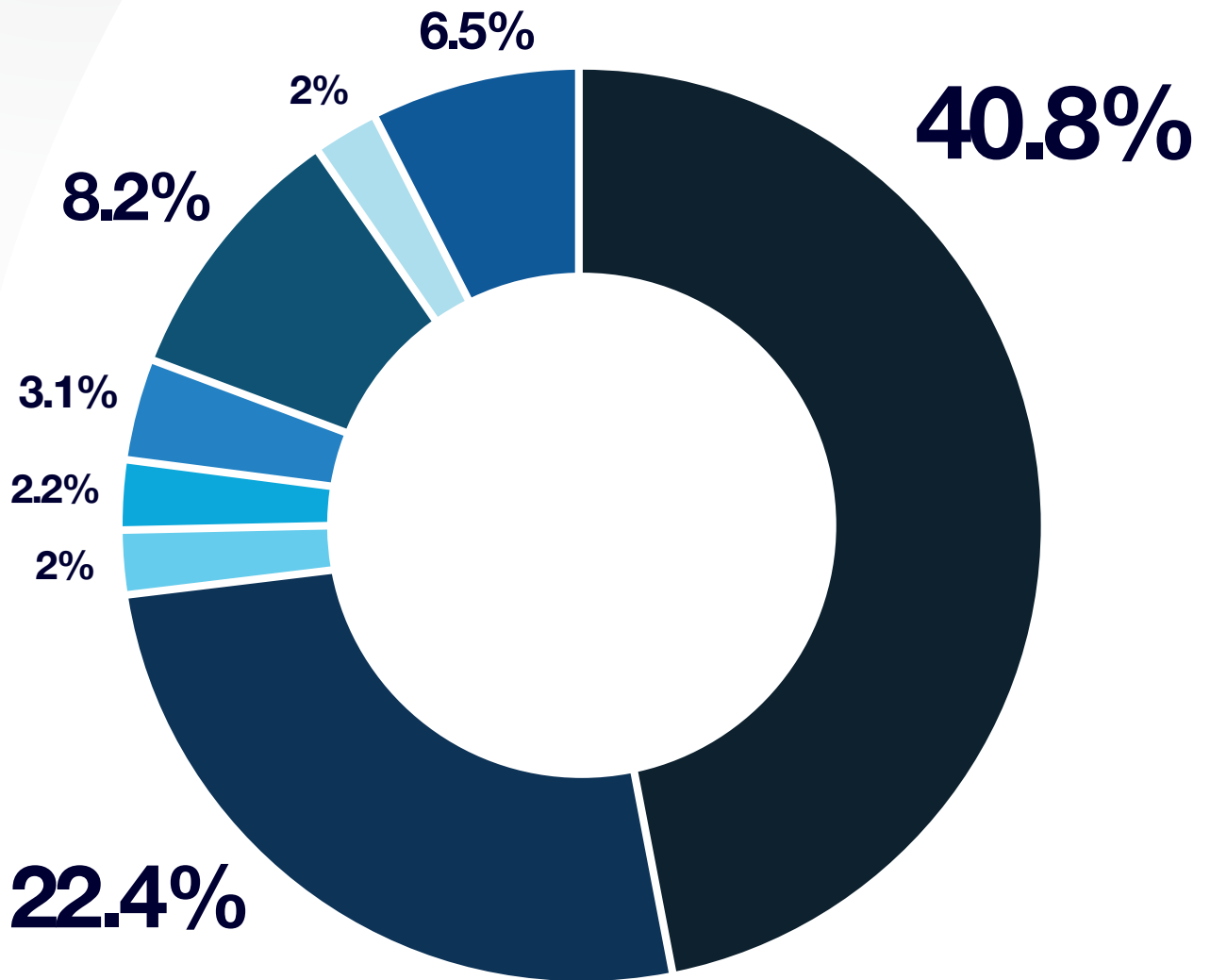
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Flocking at JYRO Boogie at Funny Farm. Photo by Cameron Puttee



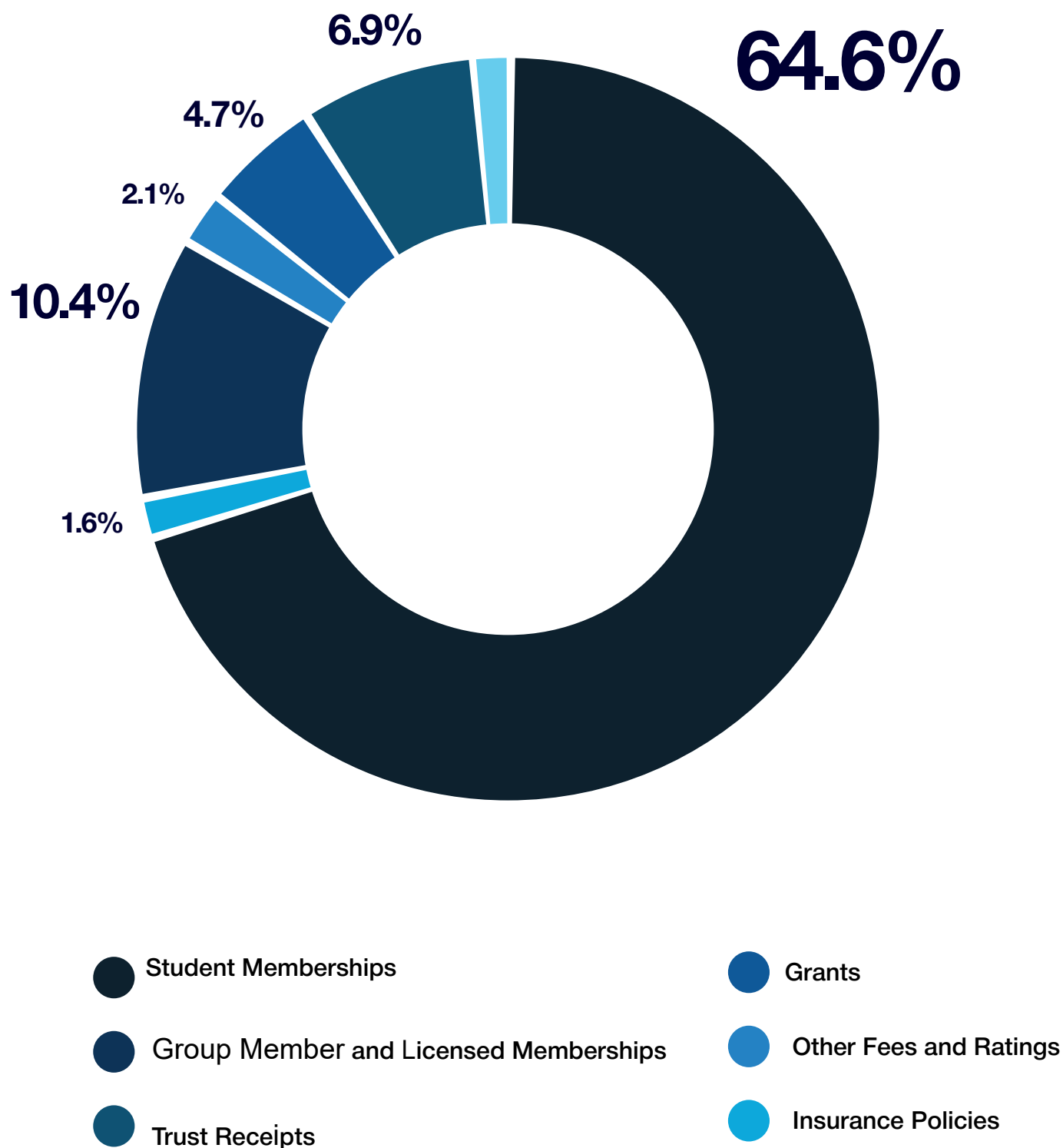
Financial Highlights and Membership Statistics

Expenses

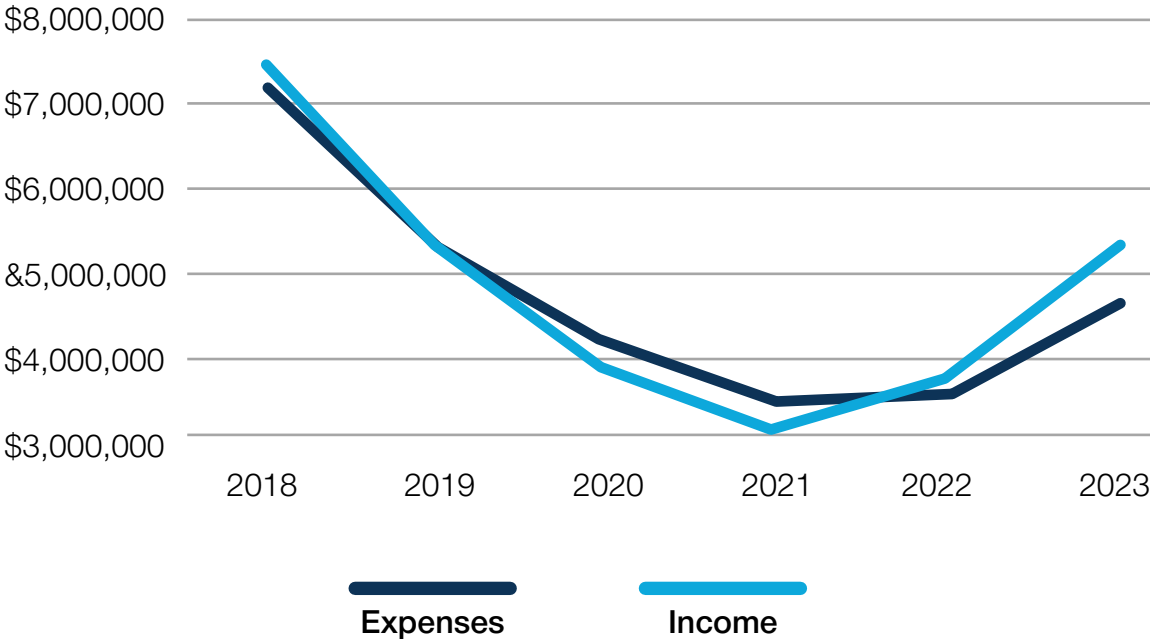


- Insurances
- Employee Benefits
- Administrative Costs
- Other
- Council Expenses
- Competitions and Teams
- Sports and Development
- Club Rebates

Revenue



Income vs Expenses



- Annual Turnover: \$5.5M
- Annual Expenses: \$4.7M
- Gain Attributable to Members: \$235,308
- Operational Revenues remain 12% lower than pre-COVID-19 levels
- 58% Growth in Competition & Teams spend compared to last year

Revenue

Increased by 42.1%

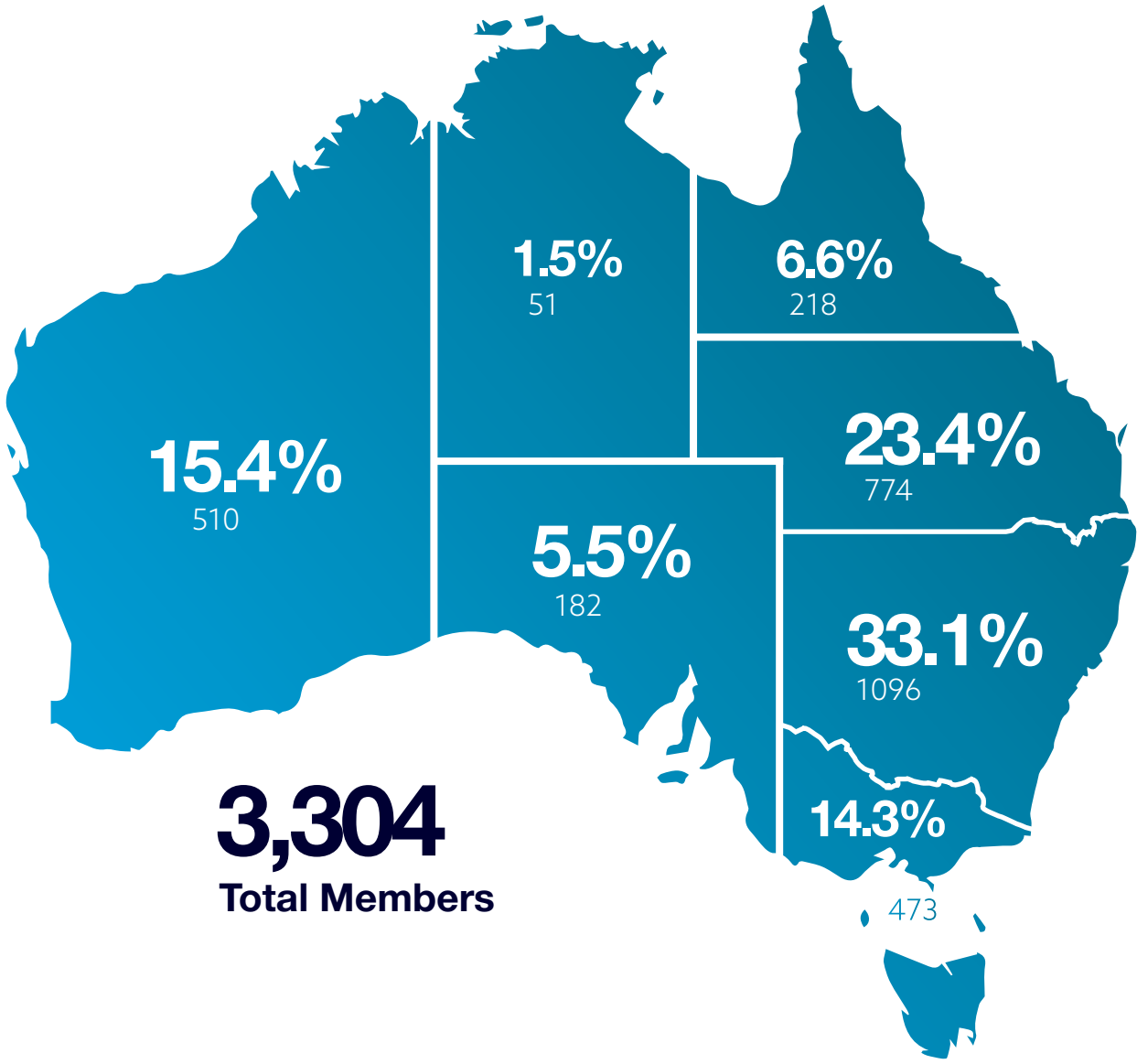


Membership

Membership Year Statistics (1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023)

Membership year statistics are those statistics which are reported based on a membership year from 1st of July through to 30th June.

Members by State



Gender Diversity



84.4%

2,791



15.5%

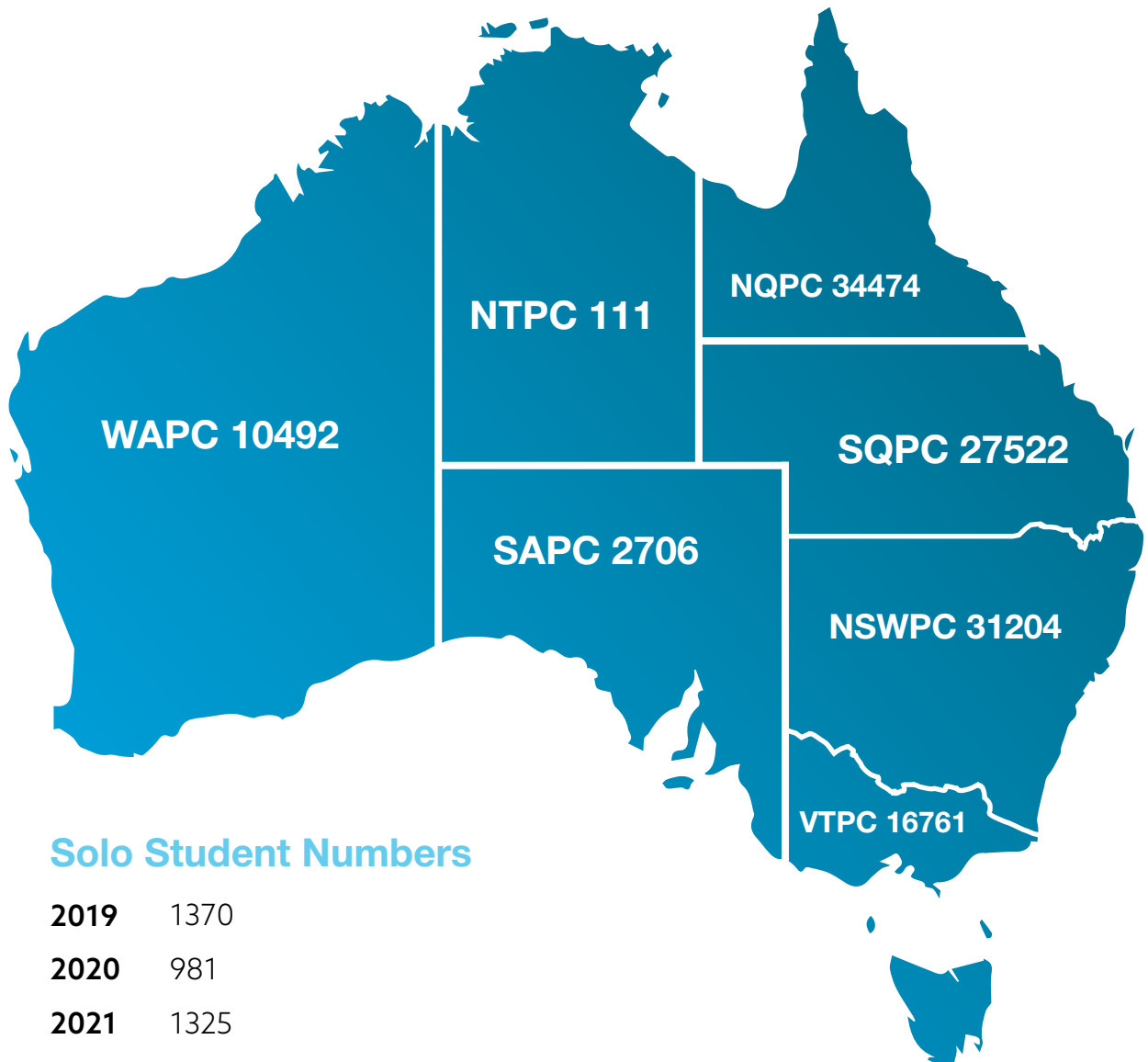
513



0%

0

Tandem Jumps in 2023



Solo Student Numbers

2019	1370
2020	981
2021	1325
2022	1528
2023	1249

Life Members

460 life members in 2023

Chief Instructor Approvals

Richard Timperon

Adelaide Tandem Skydiving

Phil Onis

Airlie Beach Skydivers

Steve Hill

Coffs City Skydivers

David Ciccicarelli

Far North Freefall Club (22/5 - 20/6)

Jules McConnel OAM

Far North Freefall Club

Greg Puttick

Skydive Airlie Beach

Max Motzo

Skydive Great Ocean Road

David Garretty

Skydive Port Macquarie (1/4 - 30/11)

Mark Schafer

Tandem Cairns

Alan Moss

Torquay Skydivers (From 13/10)

New and Non-Renewing Clubs

One new non-training organisation, Australian Defence Force Parachute Association. Skydive Nagambie and Top End Tandems did not renew their membership in 2023

Parachute Displays

There were 188 display notifications lodged in 2023, an increase of 21% from the previous year



Wingsuit Skills Camp at Skydive Ramblers, photo by Ben Dicko



Women_s Wingsuit Camp with Fiona Jansen at Skydive Oz

APF Register of Awards

APF Achievement Awards 2023

World Records

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

World and Oceania Continental Record Speed
Skydiving Highest Average Speed: 496.22 km/hour

Natisha Dingle

22/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

World and Oceania Continental Record Speed
Skydiving for Maximum Vertical Speed without a
Drogue: 500.87 km/hour

Natisha Dingle

22/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

World and Oceania Continental Record Speed Skydiving
Highest Overall Average Speed: 486.99 km/hour

Natisha Dingle

23/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

World Record Speed Skydiving Highest Overall
Average Speed - Team: 479.83 km/hour

**Natisha Dingle
Shane Turner
Mervyn O'Connell**

23/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Oceania Continental Record Greatest
Horizontal Distance 5.122km

Luke Rogers

25/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Oceania Continental Record Longest Time
105.9 seconds

Luke Rogers

21/08/2023

Prostejov, Czech Republic

Medal at a FAI World Cup

Gold Medal

Speed Skyding - National Team

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

Natisha Dingle
Shane Turner
Mervyn O'Connell

Gold Medal

Speed Skyding - Female

5th FAI World Cup Speed Skydiving

Natisha Dingle

Gold Medal

Wingsuit Flying - National Team

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Luke Rogers
Thomas Davies
Jason Dodunski

Bronze Medal

Wingsuit Performance - Individual Overall

4th FAI World Cup Sof Wingsuit Flying

Luke Rogers

Bronze Medal

Wingsuit Performance - Longest Time

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Luke Rogers

Bronze Medal

Wingsuit Performance - Distance

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Luke Rogers

Bronze Medal

Wingsuit Flying - Fastest Speed

4th FAI World Cup of Wingsuit Flying

Tahi-Paul Munroe

Australian Performance Records and Notable Achievements

Full Break Large Formation Sequential Women's 23 Way Skydive Ramblers, Toogoolawah, Qld on 6th May

Dawn Adams	Emily Hatfield	Melissa Porter
Marcela Badim Rocha Lima	Janine Hayes	Kristina Provci
Kelly Brennan	Kristina Hicks	Maria Rau
Catherine Brown	Terry Irving	Mildred Spinoza
Cheri Bullen	Jiayu Li	Anna Van der Vlugt
Kyleigh Driscoll	Caroline Loh	Emily White
Laura Fitzpatrick	Nicole Kearns	Natascha Wirz
Karen Fuller	Zhi Jun Wie	

Large Formation Skydivers over Sixty 30 Way Skydive Ramblers, Toogoolawah, Qld on 30th June

Stephen Smedley	Steve Cusato	Gwyn Burton
Martin Klapper	Shane Sparkes	Dave McEvoy
Chris Bechley	Mildred Spinoza	Geoff Bingham
Paul Osborne	Ben Nordkamp	Ian Wilkinson
Andrew Mulholland	Jim Doyle	Reginald Blain
Nigel Ackroyd	Mike Dyer	Sandor (Motzi) Molnar
Michael Connolly	Kerry Hook	Andrew Pearson
Janine Hayes	Farrell McKay	Kim Brooks
Nigel Brennan	Stephen (Chook) Chandler	Steve Fitchett (Camera)
John Winkler	Jeffrey Johnston	Dave Brown (Camera)
Peter McKenzie	Tony Maurer	

Full Break Large Formation Sequential POPs Women's 14 Way Skydive Ramblers, Toogoolawah, Qld on 23rd November

Dawn Adams	Janine Hayes
Denise Bess	Terry Irving
Kelly Brennan	Nicole Kearns
Cheri Bullen	Samantha Massey
Karen Fuller	Susie McLachlan
Jenni Funnell	Sandra Nieuwenhoven
Marcia Hammond	Anna Van der Vlugt



Skydive Oz, Photo by Tony Harrington



Rod Benson's Display Team at the 2023 Avalon Airshow. Photo by Steve Fitchett



4 way Formation Skydiving Blast Team _First Date_, competing virtually from Skydive Elderslie in the 2023 Australian Skydiving Championships

Did You Know

by Dave Smith

Why Do We Have Area Councils of the APF?

To answer this question we need to look back to the establishment of the APF. The APF was composed of clubs, and people who wanted to learn to parachute needed to join a club. The APF was set up as a federation of Clubs. APF established State/Territory Councils to bring the various clubs together, locally, under a Council Charter to better serve the needs of members. Then things changed.

States and Territory Sport and Recreation Departments offered financial assistance, but the sporting body needed to be an incorporated association under the State (or Territory) Government. So APF assisted each State Council to become an incorporated association of their State/Territory. This meant Councils became separate autonomous bodies and not legally part of, or controlled by, APF. This association model had an inherent problem.

What had started out as 'not-for-profit clubs' mostly became commercial operations owned by individuals and companies. Because voting at Council meetings was through clubs the business owner vote decided who was appointed to the various Council positions, and which new clubs were approved (or not approved) and, who became their Council's APF Board representative. The threat was a multi-DZ owner could stack the APF Board and, ordinary APF members were disenfranchised (ie. lost their voting rights).

Stay with me... as we did finally get the Area Council optimum model sorted out. Firstly APF transitioned from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee (CLG). This was a big deal, and the constitution was overhauled to better reflect what the skydiving industry had evolved to become.

As a CLG, the Members not Clubs became the effective owners of APF and, Members not the clubs, elected the APF Board. The term 'club' and 'member organisation' changed, it became 'Group Member'. As you will have observed, members are invited to directly vote for who they want on the APF Board.

Area Councils have (again) become committees of the APF and their sole purpose is to foster and promote sport in their geographical area - with financial assistance from APF and some Government funding. No longer do Councils vet CI **approvals**, consider new Group Member applications, conduct DZ audits, or deal with disciplinary matters, as all of these functions are managed through the APF National Office.

When a member attends their local Area Council meeting, they get to elect the Area Council Committee, put forward proposals for local events, and generally get involved in skydiving community matters. Funding is available from APF and State/Territory governments to subsidise sport and skills development.

APF Drug and Alcohol Policy - Then and Now?

The old rule of thumb for aviation related activities was 'eight hours bottle to throttle' so no matter how much alcohol you consumed - eight hours later you were considered fine. It was a time-based requirement that took no account of how much had been consumed.

Since then, breath-testing equipment has become widely used by police, CASA and others, to measure blood alcohol in parts per million. In aviation circles, including parachuting, 0.02% alcohol used to be permitted. Now its 0.00% and that's for a very good reason. The effect of alcohol becomes magnified with altitude. One drink at sea level is equivalent to two drinks at 10,000ft. The higher you go the greater the effect alcohol has on your performance and judgement.

APF members are required to observe this 0.00% requirement when jumping or when performing an aviation activity such as instructing, packing parachutes, refuelling jump aircraft and so on. APF, or a DZ Operator or CASA can do random tests of staff at a drop zone. CASA testing is more likely at a licensed aerodrome where there are other aviation businesses. Testing is always conducted without prior notice!

Where once it was just alcohol now there are rules applying to drugs and this is where it gets tricky. There are drugs and there are drugs... It gets particularly complicated when it involves competition where regulatory authorities like Sport Integrity Australia have rules specific to competition in sport.

The term 'drugs' covers many things: Pharmaceutical drugs to manage particular medical conditions, medication for pain management, and drugs which are considered performance enhancing. There are legal and illegal recreational drugs. Some drugs will enhance performance and are not permitted in competition and some over-the-counter drugs are banned in some sports but permitted in others. It's a minefield and competitors, particularly, need to familiarise themselves with those that apply under Sport Integrity Australia rules and FAI rules that APF is obliged to adopt for competition parachuting. The resources you need are here.

For regular jumping activities, APF has its own drug and alcohol policy here which applies to every member and all members need to be familiar with this policy. It's your personal responsibility - not the DZ Operator's responsibility - to comply when involved in an aviation activity and not be affected such that it diminishes your performance, or judgement, and could put others at risk.

We know recreational drug use is widespread throughout Australia and its often assumed, wrongly, that what you do away from the drop zone, or when jumping has finished for the day, is not jumping related or an aviation activity more generally. It's the residual effects from the drugs still within your system that matters - not how you feel, that is the measure. If there is an incident and a member is subsequently tested and, drugs or alcohol are detected beyond what's legally permitted, you have committed an offence. So be careful, responsible, and considerate of others.



Daniel Kovic at the 2023 Australian Canopy Piloting Championships, Sydney Skydivers. Photo by Andrea Haysom



Phielix Huibert at the 2023 Australian Canopy Piloting Championships. Photo by Andrea Haysom

How Has Parachuting Been Regulated Over The Years

Do you know how parachuting became an approved aviation activity in Australia? Well, it has gone through a number of twists and turns since its inception as a 'sport of sorts'. It was only in 2021 that parachuting and skydiving became finally recognised as a legitimate aviation activity with its own unique regulation: CASR Part 105 - Parachuting from Aircraft.

Back in 1959 the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) brought out its next version of Air Navigation Order (ANO) 29.1, a three page document, which set down its requirements for parachuting descents. The ANOs (later called Civil Aviation Orders) covered specialty areas, that do not comply with an internationally recognised aviation standard. By 1963 the trend towards increasing complexity can be seen here.

CAO 29.1 was expanded in the 1970s and, stayed in place until Civil Aviation Regulation (CAR 1988) came into force. Even then parachuting was permitted on what amounted to an exemption basis. CAR 152 stated: A person must not make a parachute descent if the descent is not (a) authorised in writing by CASA; and (b) conducted in accordance with the written specifications of CASA. So it was little better than operating under an exemption and it applied to 'a person' not 'The APF'.

APF O Regs became the 'CAR 152 written specifications' and this is why all changes to the Op Regs, no matter how minor, required CASA permission to change. This remained the case for more than 30 years. It was actually worse than that. CASA created its own version of the Op Regs, for a while, which it approved as *its* parachuting specification and stood beside the Op Regs but was subtly different. Which version should one use you ask?

Then when CASR 1998 came out with Part 149 reserved for ASAOs (Aviation Self-Administering Organisation) and Part 105 reserved for 'parachuting from aircraft' we were finally on the path to see a set of regulations cover parachuting as a 'legitimate aviation activity'.

It still took until 2018 to get Part 149 over the line, then 2019 to get Part 105, so really, another 25 years. We have legal certainty, but at a price! Part 149 is 30 pages long and Part 105 is 17 pages and the accompanying 105 Manual of Standards adding a further 66 pages. So, parachuting while a legitimate aviation activity is now highly regulated.

So the APF Board has now set itself the task of reducing this regulatory burden on its members and DZ Operators to something more manageable. It's a big task and will take years to achieve but it's a high priority to consolidate documents where possible.

A revised documentation suite may consist of basic regulations around safety, coupled with best practice guidelines as to how activities should be conducted. It may even be that our regulations are separated into small chapters that are relevant to the user; beginners, sport skydivers, packers, instructors, pilots, etc.

The board and CEO look forward to the challenge and as is always the case, welcome consultation with members to establish the best way forward.

Student Parachute Equipment Development Over The Years

Sport parachuting was founded on using military surplus equipment, mostly from the USA. These parachutes were never designed to be used for skydiving and there were many deaths attributable to this type of equipment, which was called 'fore and aft' equipment because the reserve was front mounted. Under a malfunctioning main - the jumper hand-deployed the chest reserve—without cutting away - by throwing it into the direction the main parachute was spinning. Sounds scary and it was.

Primitive Automatic Opening Devices were available but rarely used. The first five jumps were static-line deployment of the main parachute. On doing their first free fall with this military surplus gear there was no backup AAD. (It wasn't until years later that AADs came into widespread use when AFF became the preferred training method). But I digress...

Once higher performance main parachutes came onto the market, the jumper needed to cutaway the main parachute using Capewell fittings on both risers. The chest reserve had a pilot chute fitted and the jumper cutaway, negatively arched, fell onto their back, pulled the reserve ripcord, and hoped for the best!

Fore and aft gave way to the piggyback, still with Capewell fittings, to cutaway the main. Bill Booth invented the 3-ring release to replace Capewells, simplifying the cutaway. Bill Booth also brought the hand deploy pilot chute to market, which solved the problem of a spring-loaded pilot chute deploying into a stable skydiver's burble. These were the first of many improvements as parachutes became purpose-built for skydiving.

Parachutes Australia then took it a stage further and incorporated the SOS (single operating system) that combined cutting away the main parachute with activating the reserve - into a single action on their second-generation piggyback system called the Pigmeo. Simply "pull the yellow handle" made teaching a student how to deal with a malfunction a piece of cake compared to fore and aft gear.

Dave McEvoy at Ramblers was the first to use the Pigmeo with SOS. Not long afterwards, APF mandated the SOS for all students using the piggyback system. And later on, requiring an RSL be fitted in case a jumper did not follow through pulling the yellow handle all the way out. The Pigmeo with SOS became widely used by experienced jumpers too as you will see in group photos from the 1980s.

The SOS gave way to the two-action system when it became apparent you instruct students on the gear that they will buy for themselves. The principal of 'primacy in learning' being recognised. Student gear no longer 'can kill you' as it could, and did, back in the 1970s and 1980s. Fatalities, these days, are mostly human error, not a deficiency in the parachute itself.

And here's an interesting little-known fact: When former USA President George W Bush did his AFF jump with the Golden Knights the gear he used was fitted with the SOS. It was never mentioned that this innovation was an Australian invention. It is also not well known that the Australian designed SOS was used in other countries too. So Australia and APF has done its bit to advance parachute equipment development worldwide.

Display Jumps once required approval with 21-days notice

In the 1970s a member needed to make written application 21 days in advance of doing a display jump. The application needed to go to CAA (the predecessor of CASA) and say who was jumping, what equipment would be used, and include a map of the proposed landing area. This was managed through regional officers of CAA so was a big deal.

This created lots of work for the regulator and, eventually, APF was able to put a case to aviation regulators of how it could be managed internally within the APF. Licensed Display Examiners (DLE) examined and appointed Licensed Display Organisers (LDO) who take responsibility for who goes on a display based on their jump experience, demonstrated landing accuracy and their equipment.

APF members can obtain Display ratings which allow regular jumpers to gain a qualification that reflects how tight a Drop Zone might be. The smaller the landing area dimensions the higher the rating needed. If a flag is to be carried there are requirements that apply to the size and weight of the flag.

So APF has taken over something that was regulated by CASA and now administers display jumps itself, with the Display Organiser (DO) only needing to notify APF beforehand of a planned display.

TC, APF Board Chair, flying the NT flag.



APF is part of the International Skydiving Community

Parachuting offers the keen competitor an opportunity to compete internationally in a similar way to how the International Olympic Committee (IOC) offers athletes an opportunity to compete on the world stage.

In the case of parachuting and skydiving, 'the top of the tree' is the Federation Aeronautic International (FAI) and through Australia's sport aviation peak body, Air Sports Australia Confederation, the APF gains membership to FAI.

Members can represent Australia at World Parachuting Championships (WPCs) and World Cups held in off years to the WPC. For WPCs, you need to have been selected, by APF, to be on the Australian Parachute Team. You must have completed in the Australian National Championships in the relevant discipline.

World Cup entry is different and is available for any 'aspiring world champion' to compete under competition rules. All you need is to hold an APF/FAI Sporting Licence, which is issued to Certificate A and above automatically provided you have completed six jumps in the preceding 12-months.

There is one more body to consider: The International Skydiving Commission (ISC) is a member of FAI and sets down the rules for competition. APF has two representatives Mark (Stretch) Szulmayer and Sandy Nieuwenhoven serving on ISC committees and, following ISC meetings, APF updates its Sporting Code to mirror the rules that apply to WPC and WC events. While it might sound complicated, in most respects it follows the ISC model.





Mumbles Burning Van, Hillman Farm Skydiving Club. Photo by Cameron Puttee



4 way VFS Team, Block Party, training at Sydney Skydivers. Photo by Greg Whitehead



4 way Formation Skydiving AAA Team Whitefish competing at the 2023 Australian Skydiving Championships at Skydive Nagambie. Photo by Spot Tonson



4 way Formation Skydiving Team, The Bellas, training at Skydive Ramblers. Photo by Michael Young





Cay Boogie, Far North Freefall. Photo - Cameron Puttee



Lets Flock Sh!t Up camp at Skydive Ramblers by Nexus Flight. Photo by Cameron Puttee



The 2023 Australian Canopy Piloting Team at the World Cup in Skydive Arizona
L-R Miles Cottman, Adrian Seemann, Richo Healey, Cameron Puttee, Sean Haysom



The 2023 Australian Wingsuit Performance & Speed Skydiving team at the World Cup in Arizona. L-R Jason Dodunski, Tom Davies, Natisha Dingle, Mervyn O'Connell, Luke Rogers, Shane Turner, Tahi-Paul Munroe, Chuang Liu



The 2023 Australian representative Formation Skydiving, Whitefish, at the World Cup at Skydive Voss, Norway.
L-R Valérie Schmied, Dale Findlay, Karen Fuller, Alex Cattaneo. Front: Stephen Tonson

APF National Office Staff

The great majority of members will probably never visit the APF office nestled off the main road in Underwood, a suburb of Brisbane. However, a visit is worthwhile as firstly it brings home the reality that the office is staffed by only a handful of people. Charl and Ria work remotely but are in constant contact with their colleagues. Whether or not they happen to be skydivers, they are all passionate about the sport and committed to serving its needs.

Members often refer to "the APF" as if it is some sort of faceless bureaucracy. The reality, those few who work in the office have names and faces, and each plays an important role in administering our sport.

Let's take them in order of length of service, from longest to newest.

Sandra Jappe (2010)

At the top of the list is Sandy. Rather than list what she does, it would be easier to list what she doesn't do!!!! She seems to be everywhere in the office, helping members and colleagues. She processes applications, answers the phone and is well known to many members. She holds so much valuable knowledge and is regarded as a key member of the team that provides consistency and certainty to APF. She is a living treasure!

Jenny Larkin (2013)

Jenny spends roughly half her time (she is in the office four days per week) working as executive assistant to the CEO. The tasks cover a wide variety of topics, and she possesses a wealth of knowledge accumulated over many years. Jenny also serves as the primary Contact Officer for APF as well as being our Returning Officer for elections and Board votes. Jenny spends the remainder of her time working with the Board of Directors. She attends meetings, prepares agendas and reports, and works very closely with key Directors in that role.



Charl Rootman (2016 STO, 2019 STM)

Charl is our Safety and Training Manager. Every day he deals with the reality that not all skydives have a happy ending. He and his team endeavour to isolate the learning that may be gained from each incident and to share that learning amongst our members (and sometimes internationally). The goal is to have a training and education culture where each of us is a learner. Charl, by necessity, must work to a very high level of detail. When a jump goes wrong, it can happen in a split second, and yet the aftermath can go on for years. Charl is one of the five "Key Personnel" that has a CASA mandated role in APF.



Wade Challenor (2018)

Wade is a long-standing skydiver and an APF Judge. He has held a variety of APF positions but is currently the APF Operations Manager as well as the Board appointed Accountable Manager as required by CASA. Both of these positions require extensive skydiving expertise and Wade works closely with the CEO to ensure that the necessary expertise informs operational decisions and CASA compliance. Wade works directly with CASA to help ensure a high level of APF compliance with a huge range of external expectations that come with being a self-governing organisation.



Ria Dobson (2019)

Ria's work is well known to instructors and coaches. She regularly compiles incident reports from across the country and provides a monthly analysis which is supplied to relevant people. This is all done in the interests of safety and education. Each incident provides a learning opportunity for others and Ria is in a position where she can quickly identify trends and patterns so that our Safety and Training team can respond quickly and decisively when necessary.



Lisa Perkins (2021)

Every team benefits from having all-rounders and Lisa fills that role beautifully. She works part time, four days a week, finishing at 3pm. She may be reading and responding to emails sent to apf@apf.com.au, collecting member details and processing payments, ringing members and answering the phones. She has gained a great deal of valuable knowledge since she began working for APF.



Melanie Greenbank (2023)

Melanie assists the team (as well as members) with all aspects of IT as well as performing general office duties. A role like hers is never boring as no two days are the same. There are times where she will look after phone queries from members, and there will be other times that she will be helping to sort the occasional IT glitch. (Yes, they do occasionally happen!)



Megan Seeto (2023)

Megan is also one of the newer office staff but has quickly made her mark as our Accounts Officer. She keeps the Board and Management very well updated on our financial situation as well as overseeing the accounts of the seven area councils. Her work involves a very high level of detail, and she is well qualified to carry out this huge responsibility. She has a young family and enjoys travel and trying new cuisines. A trip to Bali is on the cards for her during her break this year.



Stephen Porter (2023)

Of course, Stephen is our CEO and leads the team profiled above. He has quickly become part of the APF family. Although he is based in the office, he has already made a number of excursions to see things firsthand. He has also virtually attended Area Council meetings where possible. Stephen's history is well documented elsewhere. Thanks to his team, and the outgoing CEO, he has had a very rapid and smooth induction into his role. He has a clear vision which will see APF become more education based, and less rules based over the coming years. He enjoys strong support from the Board for the path he has chosen in this regard.



Each of these people above is an individual, with their own hopes and dreams. They all try to have a life outside of APF which is to be admired. What brings them together is a shared professionalism, and a keen sense of responsibility to APF and its members. Not all are in attendance at all times. Sandy, Lisa and Jenny are present four days per week (not the same days!) so a continuity of service can be provided. Megan works three days a week.

Safety and Training Officers

Luke Oliver (QLD)

Luke is well qualified to be a key part of the APF safety team. He has basically seen and done it all. It is not an easy job and one which many are not capable of handling. Luke has the skills and experience to make a significant contribution in this area.

Luke is a self-confessed persistent journeyman, he is well known and respected around the country for a variety of reasons!

Mike Tibbitts (NSW, SA)

Mike is a Victorian Chief Instructor but serves the NSW and SA area in the Safety and Training capacity. He has vast experience as a Chief Instructor and also assists with the training of tandem instructors in his own area.

Mike knows that getting the training right from the outset can help minimise safety issues down the track. Mike is always on call and needs to be able to respond at a moment's notice.

Chippe Lindberg (VIC, WA, NT)

None of his jumping colleagues seem to call him anything other than Chippe (which is a nickname). He is a jovial and friendly character but when it comes to safety he is all business. He is noted for the detail of his investigations and reports. Like Luke and Mike he has wide experience, but his experience also extends to overseas operations. It is a thankless job that Chippe does but he always finds time for a smile and a kind word.

The teamwork and sharing that exists between Charl, Chippe, Mike, and Luke is critical to ensuring that we make this sport as safe as possible. The co-operation of members is critical to ensure that the messages are taken on board and actioned.



APF Establishes The Sport Development Fund

APF moved its headquarters from Canberra to Brisbane in 2010 as it was difficult to recruit staff in Canberra and, Brisbane was more centrally located to where active jumpers lived. The building in Brisbane was purchased by the Parachuting Protection Company (PPC) trust using the property in Canberra as security. APF leases space in Brisbane at commercial rates from PPC so the arrangement is not considered contrived.

When it came time to sell the Canberra property, its value had increased considerably. PPC actually made a \$900,000 capital gain on the sale and wanted to share the windfall with APF. At this point in time the APF Board decided to split the windfall from PPC into two. Half was donated to the Team Trust and the other half, \$450,000, was used to establish a new trust called the Sport Development Fund.

The Team Trust investments were doing quite well with its \$1m from donations resulting in Life Memberships. The deed specifies this trust is for competitors who make up the APT, and not regular recreational skydivers or those still undergoing training.

So the Sport Development trust was established and, the return on its investments, must go towards worthy sport development initiatives. Accordingly, individual and Group Members are free to make application for funding. Applications are considered by the Funding Committee before finding their way to the APF Board. Yet another initiative of Your APF.

APF Board - circa 1999, taken in front of APF House in Canberra



Our People



Trevor Collins

Chair; Information & Communications Technology Committee, Remuneration Committee

Trevor was appointed Board Director over 40 years ago and held the position of Chairman from 2001 to 2008. He is an active skydiver of over 40 years. He has held the position of Chief Instructor for Darwin Parachute Club NT (DPC) for more than 20 years and is an Honorary Life Member of the Club. He is Public Officer of the DPC and Top End Aerial Sports Association and was the NT Area Safety Officer for more than 30 years.

In his professional life, Trevor held many project management and program director roles over the years in the NT Government. He was a Director and Owners Representative for seven years in New Future Alliance for the construction and renovation of housing in remote areas of the NT, with an annual turnover of up to \$80m. He is now retired. Trevor is a Director of two other skydiving related companies and an APF Life Member.



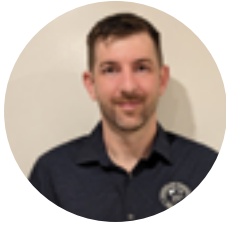
David Smith

Deputy Chair; Governance Committee; Remuneration Committee

David was appointed Board Director in 2015 after the APF moved to become a company limited by guarantee and the APF President position was abolished. He then went on to be appointed Chairman in December 2018. David has **more than 50 years** in skydiving having joined the APF in 1968 and was a CI of Wilton Parachute Centre for five years and part-owner of Parachutes Australia for 20 years. More recently, David became part-owner of Air Safety Solutions which manufactures LPU's and SPRs.

David is an expert in parachute certification, manufacture and maintenance and held the position of Director of Rigging for 17 years.

David is a pilot, Director of two other skydiving related companies and a Life Member of the APF.



Dale Findlay

**B. Eng (Mech), Grad Cert (Project Management),
MBA (Exec) Risk and Audit Committee Member**

Dale is a passionate advocate for sports development and participation. He is currently serving his first term as Director for the APF, elected by the South Queensland Parachute Council area members. In this role, he is also an active member of the risk and audit committee.

Professionally, Dale has extensive experience in engineering, working in both the resource sector and aerospace. He currently leverages his technical and leadership skills as a business development manager for Boeing in Brisbane. Dale is also a member of the Engineers Australia Divisional Committee for Queensland.



Anna Van Der Vlugt - retired May 2023

**Bach Business – Accounting & Finance, Bach Social
Work**

Anna was a board member between 2018 and 2021 through election by North Queensland Parachute Council members and was re-elected to the board by South Queensland Parachute Council members in 2022. Anna has also previously held the North Queensland Parachute Council treasurer role.

Beginning skydiving in 2007, Anna bought herself the AFF course as a graduation present for completing studies in social work and business. She worked full time in the sport between 2015 and 2020, working as a Tandem Master in North Queensland. Anna continues to be an active sports jumper.



Mark Gazley

Remuneration Committee

Mark was appointed to the Board in 2019.

Mark has been a career skydiver since 1997, prior to this he was involved in retail and logistics management. Mark is a Chief Instructor and has owned and operated predominantly Tandem DZ's since 2004. He recently opened Malaysia's first commercial skydive operation, a project which challenged him for four years. He has represented Australia at 2 WPC's, firstly in 2003, and was a medallist in 2018. He also represented Australia on the recent 200 way World Record Vertical attempts. In the role of Director, his goals are to seek positive change, whilst respecting and progressing the contributions and values of previous generations. Strategies include: the development of systemised sustainable programs, fostering and harnessing the skills/energy of new members and encouraging them to step up and contribute; a more targeted and realistic approach to sport sustainability. Mark intends to draw from his diverse exposure within skydiving and links within the broader community, to ensure the needs of all members are met.



Vivian Merz

Master of Mathematics; Diploma of Paramedicine, Risk & Audit Committee

Vivian joined the Board in 2019 by election at a meeting of NSWPC members. She has completed seven years in skydiving, and has coached for two years. She also has 100+ hours in vertical wind tunnels. Vivian's vision for the APF is to increase transparency between the Board, the members and the overall community and to aid sport safety, increase and retain sports jumpers through a prudent and effective governing body in the sport. Being a former credit risk manager for a large global investment bank, Vivian took up skydiving in 2014, and has since completed over 600 jumps, has competed in various competitions in Europe and Australia, and holds multiple Australian sequential bigway records. Prior to the appointment onto the Board she held the NSW State Coach role for 18 months and has been actively engaged in coaching and helping develop the sport at a local level.



Karen Fuller

Batchelor of Medicine and Batchelor of Surgery, Fellowship with the Australian College of GPs, Masters of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

Currently working part time as a GP in Remote Aboriginal Health. Karen joined the Board of Directors in 2023, skydiver for 28 years, starting in South Australia, now living and jumping in North Queensland, 4 way formation skydiving competitor with a passion for coaching and event organising.



Zaire Pieper - retired May 2023

Zaire (Zai) was elected to the APF Board in May 2021 and has held multiple committee positions including on the Funding Committee, Rigging Committee (Chair), and previously the North Queensland Parachute Council. Zai is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has worked in the skydiving industry since 2018 having held instructor, DZSO, and DZ management roles in addition to being the owner and Managing Director of a skydiving related company.



Mick Connolly

**B.Bus (Acc) & B.Sc (Sec) IT Committee;
Governance Committee; Risk & Audit Committee**

Mick is serving his first term as a Director with the APF. Mick is a former senior public servant with nearly 40 years of experience in a range of regulatory and administrative roles retiring in 2022.

Since retiring Mick spends much of his time travelling visiting grandchildren and remains active as an AFF instructor and fun jumper.



John Swanland

Dip Computer Education (Melb); M Ed (Melb) Chair Governance Committee

John has served six terms as Chair of the Victorian Tasmanian Parachute Council (VTPC) and has served four terms as VTPC Treasurer. John has also served multiple terms as Chair of the Area Board of Review and is currently the appointed APF National Review Officer.

In his professional life, John had a long career in education where he was promoted several times to positions including Head of Faculty, Head of Department and Head of School. After retiring at the end of 2007 John now spends much of his time in volunteer and charity work.



Andrew Mulholland (Company Secretary)

Bach of Economics; Bach of Arts; Fellow FINSIA (ret), Associate CPA Australia (ret) Company Secretary; Public Officer; Risk & Audit Committee

Andrew joined the APF Board as Director in 2015 and held the position through 2018. He has held many voluntary administrative positions in the industry, including Treasurer VPC (VTPC) in the 1990s and President and Treasurer of Commando Skydivers in the 2000s. Andrew began skydiving in 1976 and has been a recreational skydiver for over 40 years, with 10 years in both instructing and flag and demonstration jumps.

He participated on each Australian largest freefall formation record since the 81 way in October 1999, competed at State, National and International levels, and was a jump pilot 2005-2016. Andrew is a Director of two other skydiving related companies and a Life Member of the APF.

APF Board

The role of the Board is to develop corporate governance and risk management frameworks, monitor organisational performance and compliance, and set strategy to ensure APF is successful in meeting its objectives. Directors individually and the Board as a collective must at all times act in the best interests of the APF as a whole whilst managing the interests of various stakeholders including members, regulators, service providers, employees, and the general public.

The Board's primary responsibility is to govern APF. The Board of Directors, as the governing body, is responsible for accomplishing the strategic task of setting the organisation's goals, direction, limitations and accountability frameworks. Management is responsible for the allocation of resources and overseeing the day-to-day operations of APF.

The Board is required to meet at least four times per year and must develop appropriate delegations of authority to the CEO to ensure effective day to day management of the APF. The responsibilities of the Board include:

- Protect and advance the interests of the APF;
- Set the strategy of APF and develop a strategic plan.
Approve annual and long-term budgets and significant projects.
- Approve annual statements and reports;
- Develop governance and compliance frameworks.
- Set organisational culture and develop associated policies including a code of conduct and statement of values.
- Determine the fees and charges payable by members for services;
- Develop and review APF's risk framework and set the organisation's risk appetite and tolerance in each area, including regulatory, financial, market, cyber, reputational, innovative, legal, compliance, and operational risk;
- Monitor organisational performance including the integrity and effectiveness of internal controls;
- Select, appoint, monitor and terminate, as necessary, the external auditors;
- Appoint, review and evaluate the performance and employment of the CEO, including development of a succession plan and executive remuneration policy.
- Ensure compliance with all disclosure requirements and agreements with CASA and other regulators;
- Develop delegation of authority policy for Management and Board Committees.

Committees

Board Committees

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee monitors, reviews and advises the Board on governance issues, including the APF Constitution, Board performance assessment, and regulatory, statutory and policy issues. Committee members in 2023 were:

- John Swanland (Chair)
- Dave Smith
- Michael Binnie

Risk and Audit Committee

The Risk and Audit Committee assists the Board in its oversight responsibilities for all matters related to risk management and reporting, external and internal financial audit and financial risk management of the APF. This brief includes operational risks that have significant financial risk consequences. It also includes providing information and advice on risk mitigation initiatives. Committee members in 2023 were:

- Andy Mulholland (Chair)
- Vivian Merz
- Jason Corbitt
- Stephen Porter
- Dale Findlay
- Michael Connolly
- Michael Binnie

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee recommends appropriate performance measures for the CEO and determines his/her remuneration. This committee is responsible for developing criteria for advertisement of the CEO position, and for the conduct of interviews of potential Chief Executive Officers. Committee members in 2023 were:

- Trevor Collins (Chair)
- Dave Smith
- Mark Gazley

Information and Communication Technology Committee

The Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Committee develops objectives and strategies for addressing ICT issues in APF parachuting operations. Committee members in 2023 were:

- Craig Trimble (Chair)
- Luke Oliver
- Trevor Collins
- Jason Kerr

ASAO Key Personnel in 2023

In accordance with the requirements of CASR Part 149 Approved Self Administration Organisations (ASAO) the APF maintains an online register of those appointed as a Key and Appointed Person and those persons who will substitute when the incumbent is absent or cannot carry out the duties of the position.

- Richard McCooley, 149 Accountable Manager
- Dave Smith, 149 Safety Manager
- Charl Rootman, APF Safety & Training Manager
- Mark Edwards, APF National Aviation Officer
- Brett Newman, APF National Rigging Officer



Charl Rootman at PIA, with Bill Booth and Mark Procos

CEO-Appointed Committees

Technical and Safety Committee

The Technical and Safety Committee assists with development and implementation of technical and safety matters, including the Safety Management System, and monitors regulatory and statutory operational issues. Its role also includes ensuring that APF has a risk-based approach to change and in monitoring the effectiveness, and possible unintended consequences, of regulatory change. At all times this must be done in full compliance with CASA requirements. The Safety Manager is part of this committee. The Safety Manager is a Board appointment and is a CASA requirement. The Safety Manager monitors APFs Safety Management Systems and Surveillance Systems. The Committee consists of:

- Charl Rootman (Chair)
- Dave Smith, 149 Safety Manager
- Mike Tibbitts, Safety and Training Officer
- Luke Oliver, Safety and Training Officer
- Chippe Lindberg, Safety and Training Officer
- Mark Edwards, National Aviation Officer
- Brett Newman, National Rigging Officer

Aviation Committee

The Aviation Committee develops objectives and strategies for addressing aviation issues in APF parachuting operations. The role of this committee includes the monitoring of compliance with CASR Part 105. Proposed changes to rules and practices must be submitted to the Technical and Safety Committee. This committee also assists the Technical and Safety Committee in developing policy and procedures for aircraft operations and airspace-related matters referred to in the APF Exposition. Committee members in 2023 were:

- Mark Edwards (Chair)
- Ryan Roche
- Jon McWilliam
- Paul Smith
- Pete Lonnon
- Lloyd Cofield
- Brad Thomas

Sport Committee

The Sport Committee is tasked with development and implementation of sport skydiving matters in consultation with the CEO. This committee serves as a forum for the sharing and dissemination of ideas relating to maintaining and increasing participation rates in the sport. Committee members in 2023 were:

Sport Development (Area Coaches)

- Mark Higgins, NSWPC
- Vacant, SQPC
- Tim Kolln, NQPC David
- Bruce, NTPC Matthew
- Muth, SAPC Gavin
- Dell'Oro, VTPC Darragh
- Flynn, WAPC

Competition

- Mike Dyer, Accuracy Landing
- Melissa Lyle, Artistic Events
- Martin Letch, Canopy Formation
- Selwyn Johnson, Canopy Piloting
- Craig Vaughan, Formation Skydiving
- Tim Golsby-Smith, Vertical Formation Skydiving
- Ash Crick, Speed Skydiving
- Luke Rogers, Wingsuiting

Rigging Committee

The Rigging Committee develops parachute certification and maintenance standards including developing competency standards for persons who will maintain parachutes and assists with associated issues. Committee members in **2023** were:

- Zai Pieper (Chair)
- Tom Parker
- Jo Chitty
- Brett Newman
- Nathan Potter
- Darren Morgan

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee assesses nominations and reviews the categories and criteria for awards. The results of its deliberations are put forward as recommendations to the board. Committee members in **2023** were:

- Paul Osborne (Chair)
- Mark Gazley
- Sandy Nieuwenhoven
- Matt Teager
- Nathan Potter
- Paul Murphy

Funding Committee

The Funding Committee develops guidelines for sports development grants and provides assistance to the APF on other funding issues as required. The Committee considers applications for certain levels of funding.

These levels are:

- Level 2: Receive, assess and approve applications for the Fiona McEachern Sport Development Fund (FMSDF/Fi Fund) and make recommendations to the CEO or Sport Development Manager
- Level 3: Receive and assess FMSDF applications and make recommendations to the Board.

Committee members in 2023 were:

- Anna Van der Vlugt (Chair)
- Mark Szulmayer
- Maybritt Prah
- Zai Pieper
- Luke Oliver

Performance Based Funding Committee

The Performance Based Funding (PBF) Committee develops guidelines for Performance Based Funding. The purpose of this committee is to ensure that APF has a relevant, respected and user-friendly funding system relating to the support of elite athletes. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the information published on the APF website is correct and up to date. The committee is responsible for making relevant funding recommendations to the CEO based on published guidelines. Committee members in 2023 were:

- Trevor Collins (Chair)
- Jules McConnel
- Archie Jamieson

Area Councils

APF Councils are established under the authority of the Constitution of the Australian Parachute Federation Ltd as committees established by the APF Board.

The activities and performance of the Councils can be perused by reviewing the minutes of council meetings. Additionally, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend and become involved at council meetings where various positions and opportunities exist each year. Current area councils are:

- North Queensland Parachute Council
- South Queensland Parachute Council
- New South Wales Parachute Council
- Victorian Tasmanian Parachute Council
- South Australian Parachute Council
- Western Australian Parachute Council
- Northern Territory Parachute Council.

APF National Officers

The National Officers main function is to provide technical expertise to the APF industry 'experts' in key specific operational areas. In 2023, the following members held National Officer positions:

- Mark Edwards, National Aviation Officer
- Brett Newman, National Rigging Officer
- Mike Tibbitts, Safety and Training Officer
- Luke Oliver, Safety and Training Officer
- Chippe Lindberg, Safety and Training Officer

Other Key Appointed Personnel

Delegates to ASAC

- Richard McCooley
- Grahame Hill (Alt)

ISC Delegates

- Gail Bradley
- Mark Szulmayer (Alt)

ASIANIA Delegates

- Ray Williams
- Graeme Windsor (Alt)

National Review Officer

- John Swanland

PIA Delegates

- Brett Newman
- Jo Chitty (Alt)

External Relations

Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)



Australian Government
Civil Aviation Safety Authority

The Deed of Agreement

APF operates under a Deed of Agreement with CASA, for APF to perform certain functions for and on behalf of CASA. In return, CASA provides limited financial assistance. APF's responsibilities under the Deed of Agreement can be summarised as the control and administration of:

- Parachuting Operations – General;
- Parachuting Training Operations;
- Aircraft Operations in Support of Parachuting;
- Parachute Airworthiness.

To achieve the APF's Objects under its Constitution and satisfy the requirements of the Deed of Agreement, APF has the organisational and management systems in place for these functions.

Airservices Australia

Memorandum of Understanding (MOA)



APF has a formal MOA with AirServices Australia. Its purpose includes facilitating communications and supporting equitable and consistent access to airspace for parachuting operations.

Drop Zones on Air Navigation Charts

APF notifies AirServices when a drop zone is first established so other airspace users are alerted with a parachute symbol or warning on applicable air navigation charts.

Publications that deal with Parachuting Operations

APF liaises with AirServices Australia where changes are proposed to (AIP) ENR 5.5 requirements in respect to parachuting operations at Licensed Aerodromes, Class B, C, D and E airspace and CTAFs, and Manual of Air Traffic Services (MATS) 18-3-5 procedures on how ATC will separate jump aircraft from other traffic.

State Police, Coroners and ATSB – Fatality Investigation Assistance

APF has arrangements in place with most States and Territory Police through MOAs. These facilitate efficient and effective relationships with Police and Coroners on investigations involving fatalities and life-threatening injuries resulting from parachuting.



Parachute Industry Association

APF is a member of PIA which sets international standards in respect to certification and ongoing airworthiness requirements for personnel parachutes.



Affiliation to ASAC and FAI

APF is the Australian representative for sport parachuting internationally through its membership of the Air Sport Australia Confederation (ASAC) and its affiliation to the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI).



International Skydiving Commission (ISC)

APF holds direct membership of the ISC, being the sport-specific arm of the FAI, which sets the rules for international competition and record-setting within the aviation and aeronautics sphere.

ISC Technical and Safety Committee

The ISC Technical and Safety Committee issues Technical and Safety Bulletins and comparison data on worldwide skydiving fatalities. APF uses the comparative fatality data to measure its performance against international peers. ISC documents are linked to the APF website.

