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The application of the New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule Part 115 for the regulation of adventure aviation activities

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(i) Abstract

Research was undertaken to examine the implementation requirements of a proposed rule, NZCAR Part 115, which has been developed with the intention to regulate “adventure aviation” activities in New Zealand. The regulation applies to a wide range of tourism focused airborne operations including the use of ex-military and aerobatic aircraft for joyriding, passenger flights in balloons, gliders, tandem parachuting and hang-gliding operations.

The rule was considered necessary as there has been a lack of any recognized safety standards applicable to these activities when they are conducted beyond a purely recreational purpose. An increasing number of operators commercialise their activities by focusing on taking passengers for rides as opposed to conducting training or “trial flights” (which are assumed to be for the purpose of introducing people to the sport). Many of these operations use non-certified aircraft which have not been intended for the carriage of passengers on a commercial scale. Where paying passengers are carried, safety is assumed to require a greater level of management. The regulator – the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority - considers that a formal system that applies standards similar to those of small airline would be more appropriate. A new rule was required due to the novel and diverse nature of activities, and the various types of aircraft used. Specialist legislation for adventure aviation would also open up the sector for further commercial opportunities and would provide the ability to regulate such activities within the civil aviation system.

The thesis includes a review of literature which examines the basis of the legislative requirements and defines the rationale for the rule-making standard, as well as introducing notions for defining and assessing risk within aviation. The review also looks at published industry reaction to the development of the Rule. A part of the research, the survey of operators, elicits their opinion as to the workability of the new legislation. The survey also tests the current level of each operator’s compliance according to a 72 point checklist of operational items and ascertains what modifications to the systems and practices are required in order to comply.

The research outcomes identified two groups of operators - one of which has standards and systems that are close to compliance with the new legislation and the other for which compliance would be difficult due to deficient systems and practices. Analysis of the differences highlighted a cultural separation of the groups in terms of their connection with mainstream general aviation and their understanding of the risk management concepts and practices required for commercial operations.

The discussion of the results of the research highlights problems with the application of the proposed regulation, particularly to the non-compliant group. Issues include the recreational origins of the sector, a lack of acceptance of the Rule by operators, and on-going problems with the consultation and collaboration in the rule-development process.

Workable compliance strategies and processes are discussed, including developing an ecological approach to managing safety as part of best practice. Recommendations look at possible strategies for implementation including the requirement for more pro-active education and enculturation processes, and the formation of a national representative body.
(ii) Attestation

I understand the nature of plagiarism, and I am aware of the University’s policy on this.

I certify that this dissertation reports original work by myself.

Signature

Date

(iii) Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of

The Participants in the Survey

   Monique Day – for her invaluable assistance and advice with processing of data for statistical analysis.

   Dr Stephen Webb of the Cawthron Institute, Nelson, for assistance on statistical methods.

   Dr Ross St. George in his capacity of supervisor and for his comments and editing.
(**iv**) **Table of Contents**

(i) Abstract .................................................................................................................. 1  
(ii) Attestation .............................................................................................................. 2  
(iii) Acknowledgements .............................................................................................. 3  
(iv) Table of Contents .................................................................................................. 3  
(v) List of Figures ........................................................................................................ 6  
(vi) List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................ 7  
(viii) Glossary ............................................................................................................... 8  

**Chapter 1. Introduction** ............................................................................................ 11  
1.1 Context .................................................................................................................. 11  
1.2 Scope and Objectives ............................................................................................. 12  
1.3 Outcomes ............................................................................................................... 13  

**Chapter 2. Review of Literature** ............................................................................ 15  
2.0 Summary of sections ............................................................................................. 15  
2.1 The background of recreational flying in New Zealand .................................. 16  
2.2 The development of current industry regulations and monitoring .................. 19  
2.3 Issues regarding the present regulatory standards ............................................ 22  
2.4 Rule-making for adventure aviation and commercialised recreational flying .... 26  
2.5 A global view of the basis of rule-making for aviation – how the new regulation may fit 27  
2.6 The local view of adventure aviation regulation and safety management ........ 33  
2.7 The demand for adventure aviation regulation .................................................... 37  
2.8 How the current safety standards are set .............................................................. 40  
2.9 Safety performance indicators – what the new Rule is expected to achieve ...... 43  
2.10 SMS – a recognised formal standard for aviation .............................................. 45  
2.11 The application of the new Rule Part 115 – regulatory intention, operator perceptions 48.  

**Chapter 3. Survey Research Outline** .................................................................... 52  
3.1 Research Goals ....................................................................................................... 52  
3.2 Research process ................................................................................................... 52  
3.3 Research: the review of literature ......................................................................... 53  
3.4 The requirement for field research ....................................................................... 54  
3.5 Expectation of the survey design ......................................................................... 55  
3.6 Specific Issues identified ....................................................................................... 55  

**Chapter 3. Methodology** ......................................................................................... 57  
4.1 Design of the survey ............................................................................................. 57  
4.2 The interview process ........................................................................................... 59  
4.3 Privacy and Confidentiality .................................................................................. 61  
4.4 Limiting factors ..................................................................................................... 61  
4.5 Statistical analysis processes ............................................................................... 64  

**Chapter 5 Results of the Survey** ............................................................................ 66  
5.1 Summary of the data presentation ....................................................................... 66  
5.2 Operator’s intentions to apply for certification .................................................... 67  
5.3 Workload and the cost of compliance .................................................................. 68  
5.4 Replication Scale .................................................................................................. 70  
5.5 Utilisation of an operations procedures manual .................................................. 71  
5.6 Compliance with Part 115 Rule standards – 72 item checklist ......................... 72
5.7 Compliance scores by grouping the activities: Group 1, Group 2... 75
5.8 Compliance level influential factors .......................... 77
5.9 Indications from the statistical analysis ........................... 82
5.10 Qualitative Analysis - Checklist responses ......................... 88
  5.10.1 Organisational systems .................................. 88
  5.10.2 List of nominated Personnel & Statement of Roles ........... 89
  5.10.3 Equipment specifications ................................... 89
  5.10.4 Minimum equipment requirements .......................... 90
  5.10.5 Operations procedures specifications ........................ 91
  5.10.6 Operational range and minimum height specifications ....... 92
  5.10.7 Aerodromes landing takeoff sites; suitability statements .... 93
  5.10.8 Meteorological information .................................. 94
  5.10.9 Emergency planning .......................................... 95
  5.10.10 Post-flight procedures ....................................... 96
  5.10.11 Qualification, medical standards, currency monitoring system ...97
  5.10.12 Personnel training ........................................... 97
  5.10.13 Safety advisories and communications ....................... 99
  5.10.14 Fatigue management ......................................... 99
  5.10.15 Quality Assurance systems ................................... 99
5.11 Qualitative analysis - the Questionnaire ......................... 101
  5.11.1 Understanding of the new Rule standard ....................... 102
  5.11.2 Acceptance of the Rule as a suitable standard ............... 103
  5.11.3 Compliance processes and strategies ........................ 104

Chapter 6 Discussion .................................................. 104
  6.1 Key Findings ..................................................... 104
  6.2 Gap Analysis ..................................................... 105
  6.3 Emerging themes .................................................. 106
  6.4 Understanding ..................................................... 109
  6.5 Acceptance ........................................................ 111
    6.5.1 An acceptance gap .......................................... 111
    6.5.2 Information and education regarding SMS and best practice ... 112
    6.5.3 Insufficient collaboration and consultation ................. 113
    6.5.4 Integration of organisational safety philosophies&concepts ... 121
  6.6 Compliance ........................................................ 123
    6.6.1 The reality of implementation, minimum requirements for Part 115 ... 125
    6.6.2 How operators might implement the change .................. 127
    6.6.3 Change as an opportunity .................................... 132
    6.6.4 The status of regulation and accreditation ................... 135
    6.6.5 Circumvention and non-compliance .......................... 136
  6.7 Required process .................................................. 137
    6.7.1 Components .................................................... 137
    6.7.2 The Implementation of SMS .................................... 137
    6.7.3 Support systems .............................................. 137
    6.7.4 Measurement .................................................. 145
    6.7.5 Cultural programming ....................................... 146

Chapter 7. Conclusions & Recommendations .......................... 148
  7.1 Conclusions ....................................................... 148
  7.2 Recommendations .................................................. 150
  7.3 Future research ................................................... 152

References ............................................................... 153
### Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1 The key elements of SMS for a small aviation operator</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2 – Operator Survey: Questionnaire and Checklist</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3 – data sets and raw data check-sheet samples</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4 - Micro organisations</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

Figure 1. Pie chart: Intention of Operators to apply for certification – All operators ..................66
Figure 2. Pie chart: Chart – operators perceived workload – All operators ..............................67
Figure 3. Pie chart: operators perceived compliance costs – All operators ...............................68
Figure 4. Pie chart: Operators agreement: “Part 115 would replicate what I already do” .............69
Figure 5. Pie chart: Proportion of operators having OPM ..................................................70
Figure 6. Pie chart: Proportion of operators QA compliant having OPM ...............................70
Figure 7. Histogram: Operators achieving compliance (72 item Checklist) .............................72
Figure 8. Bar chart: Compliance Achievement and Range ..................................................73
Figure 9. Histogram: Compliance scores by group ..............................................................74
Figure 10. Compliance and number of personnel relationship ..............................................79
Figure 1b. Pie chart: Intention of Operators to apply for certification – Group 2 .....................82
Figure 2b. Pie chart: Chart – operators perceived workload – Group 2 .................................82
Figure 3b. Pie chart: operators perceived compliance costs – Group 2 ..................................83
Figure 4b. Pie chart: Group 2 Operators: “Part 115 would replicate what I already do” ..........83
Figure 6b. Pie chart: Proportion of Group 2 operators QA compliant having OPM ...............84
Figure 6c. Pie chart: Proportion of Group 1 operators QA compliant having OPM ...............84

Table 1. Compliance scores by group ..................................................................................75
Table 2. Compliance with Quality Assurance standards ......................................................77
Table 3. Compliance scores by CAA licence .........................................................................78
Table 4. Comparison of CAA Licence and QA standard ......................................................79
## List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Advisory Circular</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAA</td>
<td>The (New Zealand) Civil Aviation Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>Civil Aviation Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAO</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZCAR</td>
<td>see CAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRM</td>
<td>Notice of Proposed Rule Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZHGPA</td>
<td>New Zealand Hang gliding and Paragliding Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZPIA</td>
<td>New Zealand Parachute Industry Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA</td>
<td>Quality Assurance – see glossary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAANZ</td>
<td>Recreational Aircraft Association of New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Sport Aviation Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Safety Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>VOSL</td>
<td>Value of a Statistical Human Life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(vi) Glossary

Acceptable means of compliance - The practices and processes by which a certificate holder achieves compliance with a Civil Aviation Rule (CAR), as assessed by the regulatory authority in the certification process.

Advisory Circular (AC) - Advisory information produced by the CAA which is subordinate, and in reference to, a Civil Aviation Rule, and which contains information on methods and practices to enable an acceptable means of compliance.

Best practice – Current practice expressed as a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. Best practice is implemented according to defined technical standards and benchmarks as being the most appropriate to achieving the required outcomes. Operational best practice relates to all parts of the operation including policies and procedures, the health and safety of individuals, environmental and economic sustainability, compliance with regulatory requirements, and the promotion of continuous improvement.

Exposition - The term used by the New Zealand CAA for a written description of the organisational and operational systems for achieving an acceptable means of compliance for certification under any relevant CAR. It includes a company's operations manual.

General Aviation (GA) - The category of civil aviation that refers to flights other than military flights, or scheduled airline and regular cargo flights in aircraft greater than 5700kgs. It includes commercial and private flying.

Microlight - An category of powered aircraft having a take-off weight of less than 540kg, which are not certified under the normal airworthiness category for light aircraft. The maximum weight restriction, and a limit to no more than two occupants, allows a range of experimental light aircraft to operate without the higher specification of larger aircraft. The category was instigated to allow suitable regulatory flexibility for amateur design and construction. It further allows piloting qualifications to be issued by recreational organisations certificated under CAR Part 149.

Micro-organisations - Independent Organisations having a low work force and low level of resourcing. Micro-organisations usually have less than 5 members or employees and may have–as little as one individual member (see Appendix 3 for a description of micro-organisations as they apply to Adventure Aviation)

NZCAR Part 1 - New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule that specifies Definitions and Abbreviations

NZCAR Part 115 - the New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule currently under development that specifies requirements for the certification of commercial activities carrying out Adventure Aviation
NZCAR Part 135 - The New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule that specifies requirements for the certification of commercial activities in small aircraft (less than 5700kgs and a passenger capacity of 9 seats or less) and helicopters.

NZCAR Part 141 - New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule that specifies requirements for the certification of flight training operations.

NZCAR Part 149 - New Zealand Civil Aviation Rule that specifies requirements for the certification of recreational aviation organisations. Current 149 certificate holders are;
- Gliding New Zealand Incorporated
- New Zealand Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (NZHGPA)
- New Zealand Parachute Industry Association (NZPIA)
- NZ Skydiving Association
- Recreational Aircraft Association of New Zealand (RAANZ)
- Sport Aviation Corp limited (SAC)
- Royal New Zealand Aero Clubs (RNZAC)
- The New Zealand Warbirds Association

Quality Assurance (QA)- The monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a product or service to maximize the probability that minimum standards of quality are being attained. QA cannot absolutely guarantee quality but is a systematic process to eliminate the obstacles to improving quality as they arise. A monitoring system may utilise testing for quality, sampling to enable quality profiling, statistical process control, and continuous improvement processes

Safety Management System (SMS) - An internationally recognised best-practice approach to managing safety and risk including the necessary systemic organisational structures, accountabilities, policies and procedures

Safety Target Outcome - Under the assumption that, in aviation, safety is outcome based, safety target outcomes are expressed in terms of social costs (including deaths) either over a targeted period or per seat hour

Ultrasafe - In aviation terms, “ultrasafe” describes a safety level near or beyond $10^{-6}$ accidents per hours flown.