



NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY  
OF AIR SAFETY INVESTIGATORS

# NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025

Editorial note – this started life as the September issue but was held over until after the ISASI seminar, then again until after we had had an Executive meeting. That was held after a certain amount of cat-herding, so here we are. The next issue will be before Christmas.

## President's Preamble

Kia ora koutou e te whanau,

Jim and I have finally transferred control of the cowbell and all the other bits your President needs to know. I really want to thank Jim for keeping NZSASI moving forward during his time in the chair. Our membership is adapting with the changes to Safety Investigation across the world and staying relevant in a changing environment is vital for any organisation. Your committee is already looking at our next seminar in June 26 in Wellington. Put your thinking caps on for presentations on all the interesting things you are getting up to or have learned, so we can all benefit and while you exercise your grey matter what can we do as Air Safety Investigators to remain attractive as a professional body.

## VP's Views

Good day friends. I hope you are all doing well.

I was able to attend the annual ISASI seminar in Denver and I'll report on a few items later. There is one thing that needs to go first and that is a security warning to anyone attending a seminar, specifically with their personal electronics. Olivier Ferrante, ISASI VP, reported that at the ISASI 2024 seminar in Portugal, an organised thief surreptitiously entered the conference room and stole 14 delegates' laptops. The person was apprehended later but the laptops were not recovered. As bad as that was, it could have been worse. The thief was interested only in the hardware and not the data therein.

On that note, Kensington locks are still a good idea, even though they seem difficult to come by in locksmith stores. I usually chain my laptop up in my hotel room because you never know. Some good advice from Denver was feel free to politely confront a delegate not wearing their name badge. Chances are that they have lost or forgotten it, but everyone should be identifiable to maintain the security of the venue.

## COCKTAIL RECEPTION FOR NZSASI MEMBERS

Moving onto something everyone loves: free food and drinks! The Honourable Company of Air Pilots (HCAP) has invited **ALL** NZSASI members to a cocktail reception in Wellington on Monday November 17, starting at 1730. The head of the HCAP (formally titled the Master) is visiting NZ from London in November as part of an annual global tour to visit the organisation's Regions

(NZ, Australia, Hong Kong, and North America). The Master is interested in meeting members of NZSASI and discussing current aviation issues, as he is aware that we share a webinar series. So I'll say again, **ALL** NZSASI members are invited to the HCAP Cocktail Reception on Monday November 17 at 1730 at the Wellington Club. Please see the attached invitation for more details. If you are interested, please RSVP to the HCAP NZ's Chair & Administrator Ron Thacker at: [admin-nz@airpilots.org](mailto:admin-nz@airpilots.org) and also CC me that email. This is a fun event and it would be great to see as many NZSASI members there as possible.

#### ISASI 2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

Next year's 2026 seminar will be in Dubai. MENASASI (the Middle East and North African Society) will be the hosts, and indicated they are looking at the last week of October for that seminar. ISASI 2027 the following year may be hosted by the Canadian Society (CSASI). At Denver, a few of the societies had enough members present to have formal meetings, so I attended the CSASI meeting. They discussed potential venues and Montréal received the most positive feedback. Cities like Vancouver and Québec City, while physically beautiful, have priced themselves out of the market for ISASI seminars. Hence Montréal seems to be the most likely candidate but as we all know in this business, thou shalt not count the chickens until ye sees they have hatched. What makes Montréal so attractive is the city gives sponsorship funds to organisations that host conferences there. This is a huge advantage over other cities. It would be nice if other cities around the world took note of this example and followed suit. Potential extra-curricular activities in Montréal are a tour of ICAO Headquarters, Bombardier's production facility, and the Canadian Space Agency.

CSASI VP Martin Leblanc, who by day works for Canada's equivalent to the Australian DFSB, brought up that CSASI was struggling to grow their membership (as are many Chapters and regional Societies. So I told them about our webinar series, how it has helped us out, and highly recommended that CSASI set up their own webinar series. I will be inviting the CSASI leadership to our next webinar so they can see for themselves.

I attended one of the Tutorials about difficult accident investigations presented by Glen Grubb from JAARS (Jungle Aviation and Radio Service – [www.jaars.org](http://www.jaars.org)). His Tutorial was scheduled for 2.5 hours but I've asked him if he could condense his presentation to fit into our webinar time slot and he has kindly agreed. Now all we have to do is just set a month. Several of the examples from Glen's presentation involved flying in Papua New Guinea, which I know will resonate with the experiences of some of our NZSASI members. I also met several other people at the seminar who are interested in presenting during our webinar series.

On that note, we have had the following webinars since the start of the year:

- January – Judy Cullinane, a flight attendant turned lawyer whose aviation career was sadly cut short by breathing contaminated air in the cabin of her aircraft.
- February – Reverend Dr. Richard Waugh, HCAP NZ Honorary Chaplain and historian discussing NZ aviation in the 1920s & 1930s.
- March – Graeme Langford of the Auckland Airport Fire & Rescue Service discussing their operations.
- April – Thorkell Agustsson, the Chief Investigator of Air Accidents at Iceland's Safety Investigation Authority.
- May – Peter Teahen & John Ockenfels talking about their around-the-world flight to raise money to end Polio.

- The June webinar was cancelled because of its proximity to the ANZSASI annual seminar.
- July – we had Eli Pasquali from the Canadian TSB talking to us about report writing and some of his investigations.
- August – could not be completed due to the guest speaker losing his internet connection. He will return in January 2026 to finish his presentation. This was the first time we could not complete a webinar due to technical issues in 4.5 years which IMO is an impressive achievement. A back-up plan has been developed if this happens again, with videos from the reputable RTCA aviation organisation (<https://www.rtca.org/>). By all accounts the host handled this problem quite well.
- September 2025 we had Capt. Herwin Bongers discussing pilots' mental health.
- The October webinar was cancelled because of its proximity to the ISASI annual seminar.

The following webinars are planned for the rest of the year:

- On November 12, our guest speaker will be Duane Sparkes, an aerial firefighting captain with over 20 years' experience in the business. He'll be talking about the use of aircraft effectively to get wildfires under control and how aerial firefighting has evolved over the course of his career.
- On December 10, we'll (tentatively) have Darren Straker, the former Chief Inspector of Accidents with the Hong Kong Air Accident Investigation Authority. He'll be talking about some of the investigations he was Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) of as well as safety in the realm of Flight Testing.
- On January 14, 2026 we'll have Grant Newman back to finish his presentation about the (thankfully-not-required) modification that was proposed for the Lancaster bomber in WW2 enabling it to carry nuclear weapons.
- On February 11, we'll (tentatively) have Corporal Dean Scott from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police describing how he was the first responder to an ATR accident in the Canadian Arctic. He was the one and only active police officer stationed in this remote community so he had to get the survivors medical attention then do a very rushed accident investigation before a blizzard rolled in and potentially destroyed evidence.

In closing, keep doing the safety work you're doing, even if it's a tough slog. Feel free to reach out to me if you are struggling with the stress or pressures of daily life.

Finally, ***I really need a co-host for the webinars when I'm away.*** I'm grateful for HCAP Chair & Administrator Ron Thacker's and Bill MacGregor's help when I'm away but it's not possible for them to be there all the time either. ***Please think of someone and let me know.***

## Sec/Treas Section

Hi all,

It's been a busy time here in Canberra, with a number of ongoing investigations, but I'm looking forward to some time at home (and seeing some green grass, even if I'll have to mow it...) over Xmas/NY's.

I attended the PACDEFF Human Factors conference in Sydney over the period 16-17 September – it was great to catch up with a few familiar NZSASI faces there and listen to some very interesting presentations.

I have heard some mixed feedback from those that attended ISASI 25 in Denver, Colorado. We'll be using this feedback to improve our upcoming ANZSASI 26 seminar, which is going to be held in Wellington 05-07 June 2026. As always, the success of any conference hinges on the quality of the presentations – as such, I encourage you all to consider making a presentation. The Call for Papers will come out very soon

ANZSASI 26 will be held at the James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor in the heart of Wellington's CBD. As well as the presentations, the professional networking opportunities will be fantastic. Given Wellington is home to CAA, TAIC and HQNZDF, you can always add some meetings on at the end, if that helps getting your travel bookings approved.

We have arranged a discounted room rate for the seminar, but there are only a limited number of rooms available, on a first-come-first-serve basis. See the information below, including the booking link.

**Booking Details:**

Arrival Date: 05 June 26  
Departure Date: 07 June 26  
Attendee/Group Code: 574965

Online booking link: <https://reservations.travelclick.com/10799?groupID=4923328>

**Room Type and Rates:**

Terrace Room

- NZ\$189 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 1 person),
- NZ\$219 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 2 people)

Executive Room

- NZ\$239 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 1 person),
- NZ\$269 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 2 people)

**The fine print:**

- All guests to book & pay direct.
- Prices include GST.
- Rates quoted are per room, per night on a single, double or twin occupancy.
- All rooms and rates are subject to availability.

Lastly – as you'll appreciate with around 50 members, keeping track of everybody is an ongoing struggle. To limit the cat-herding, please keep your contact information updated. Just drop me an email at [nzsasi.sec@gmail.com](mailto:nzsasi.sec@gmail.com) with any changes. We also encourage member input to these Newsletters – if you've got anything to pass on, just let me know!

Cheers,  
Wayne

## Membership and International Council (AB)

### Membership

There's not much to report locally; no change since the BGM report. ISASI is currently showing 1071 active members, with two or three new applications being submitted each week. The Membership Committee is thus not exactly overworked.

We may have a 'lapsed' member reinstating soon; a word on that – if a lapsed member wishes to reinstate, submitting the form early in the year along with the fee (which is one year's dues, US\$95) covers the current year; submission after 1 November covers the remainder of the current year plus all of the next year's dues. The fee on the current reinstatement form is showing as US\$80 – the form needs updating to the new figure.

Many members have yet to log in to the ISASI website to ensure that their contact details are up to date. Use the address <https://isasi.wildapricot.org/> and log in with your email address and password if you have one. If not, choose 'Forgot Password' and a new one will appear in your inbox (at the email address stored in the database). If the stored address is no longer your current one, the login won't work. In that event, contact me ([alpha-bravo@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alpha-bravo@xtra.co.nz)) and I'll look it up if you can't remember what it was. I encountered that very problem last week, when attempting to log into the RAeS site – the old email address was long-past its use-by date.

And to echo Wayne's plea, let him know ASAP if any of your contact details change, even if you've updated them in the ISASI database. If you can't log in for any reason, pass the new info to Wayne, and we can update the database for you.

### Council Matters

The International Council meeting (ICM) was held on 28 September, the Sunday preceding the Denver seminar. VP Mike attended as an observer, but I was unable to attend in person. I did, however, submit several agenda items, some of which involved a considerable amount of pre-meeting discussion.

One was a progress report on the rewrite of the Council's Policy and Procedures Manual; this task has taken about 18 months, with most of that time spent awaiting responses and gaining consensus on various sections of the manual. The actual drafting was not a major task, mostly involving cutting out irrelevant content and updating where required. The final draft word count is 6334 down from the original 13,933.

The actual effective date is dependent on the result of the forthcoming vote on ISASI Bylaw updates. The changes voted on earlier this year contained some anomalies, which I tried to head off before the vote went out. Somehow that got missed, so I submitted the proposed corrections to the ICM and these were accepted unanimously. Expect to receive a voting email from ISASI in the near future – and please vote. The last response was on a par with the recent NZ local body elections turnout.

Apart from some minor editorial fixes, the main issue was in the membership category definitions. Voting rights and entitlements to *Forum* were wrongly located there instead of their rightful places; also, corporate members will now be required to nominate a primary and alternative representative (the three NZ corporates have already). This is already provided for both on the membership application form and in the ISASI membership database. For my troubles, I'm now a member of the Bylaws Committee!

A Council motion passed at the May 2015 ICM was to expand the ISASI voting rights to all membership categories except Honorary, but was not followed up by the Bylaw amendment process. I raised this issue as well, but the consensus of the latest meeting was that the motion had lapsed because of the lack of follow-up. It's still a live issue, so I 'expect' it to surface again at the next ICM.

A suggestion that the ICM draft minutes were circulated within the three weeks after each meeting did not gain any traction. With the meetings around six months apart, most people have forgotten the finer detail by the time the minutes are circulated just prior to the next meeting. Our own Sec/Treas Wayne is quite the opposite – he has the draft minutes out within a couple of days.

Just picking up on Mike's mention of Kensington locks – check the PB Tech website, which lists a selection of these.

## President's Postscript

I would like to thank your committee for keeping the society wheels turning. Please look out for the call for papers for our seminar as June 26 will be here before you know it, tune into Mike Z's seminar program whenever you can and by the time you read this it will be less than 7 weeks to Christmas!

Stay safe and curious my friends.

Nga Mihi  
Graham

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## **The Honourable Company of Air Pilots New Zealand Region**

### **COCKTAIL RECEPTION MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2025**

The New Zealand Region of the Honourable Company cordially invites you to a Cocktail Reception for the visiting Master of the Honourable Company, Mr John Denyer. Details for the event are:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Date    | Monday 17 November 2024   |
| Venue   | The Wellington Club, 4/88 The Terrace, Wellington   |
| Timing  | 5:30 – 7:30 PM  |
| Dress   | Business Suit, Ladies to suit   |
| Format  | Reception by the Chairman of the New Zealand Region, WGCDR (Rtd) Ron Thacker MNZM. Guest of Honour is the Master of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, Mr John Denyer, accompanied by Mrs Kate Denyer.<br><br>Drinks and Canapes will be provided. |
| Partner | You are cordially invited to bring a partner.   |
| RSVP    | By 3 November 2023<br><br>Email: <a href="mailto:admin-nz@airpilots.org">admin-nz@airpilots.org</a><br>Mobile: 021 278 089 (Chair, Ron Thacker)   |