

Chair's Report — 2026

Good morning everyone, and thank you for joining us today, both here at Bathurst and online.

I'd like to keep my report fairly brief and focus on where we have come from, what we have achieved over the past 12 months, and where we are heading.

Acknowledgements

Before I do that, I want to recognise two people who made significant contributions to NSW Gliding before the current Board.

Firstly, **Kerrie Claffey**, for the enormous amount of time and effort she contributed to NSW Gliding over many years. Kerrie's contribution to the organisation and to gliding in NSW deserves our recognition and thanks.

I would also like to acknowledge our former President, **Duncan Tchakalian**, and the considerable work he undertook during his approximately 18 months with NSW Gliding.

In particular, Duncan drove much of the work involved in restructuring the organisation, developing our new Constitution and transitioning NSW Gliding from its previous committee structure to the Board structure we have today.

Both Kerrie and Duncan made significant contributions, and on behalf of NSW Gliding, I would like to thank them.

Building the foundation

For the current Board, the past 12 months have largely been about building the foundation for the future.

Three areas have been particularly important.

First, systems and processes. We have worked to put the governance systems around our new Constitution into practice and create a more structured and accountable organisation.

Second, membership growth. We have placed a much stronger focus on participation, development and ultimately growing the number of people involved in gliding.

And **third, relevance and presence.** We want NSW Gliding to be an organisation that clubs and members see, hear from and, most importantly, receive value from.

Membership growth

One of the most encouraging results is that our membership has grown over the past financial year.

Total membership increased from **679 in July 2025 to 694 in June 2026 — an increase of 2.2%.**

Male membership increased from **615 to 622**, or approximately **1.1%.**

Female membership increased from **64 to 72**, which is a particularly encouraging increase of **12.5%.**

And junior membership increased from **178 to 184**, an increase of approximately **3.4%**.

These aren't enormous numbers in isolation, but the direction is important.

We are growing again.

Over the last five years, total membership has moved between a low of approximately **672** and a high of **835**. We are currently at **694**, so there is clearly considerable room to rebuild.

Our objective now is not simply to maintain membership. It is to establish sustained year-on-year growth and use that as one of the measures by which we judge our success.

What our portfolios delivered

Importantly, behind those membership numbers there has been a considerable amount of activity across our portfolios.

Operations

Our Operations portfolio delivered one of the largest instructor training courses we have seen in NSW in recent years.

The Narromine course produced one new Level 3 instructor, two Level 2 upgrades, three new AEs and seven new Level 1 instructors.

NSW Gliding funding was instrumental in allowing that program to proceed.

Operations also completed its scheduled safety and operational audits across a number of NSW clubs and has established regular engagement between the RMO, club CFIs and Level 3 instructors.

Airworthiness

Airworthiness has also had an exceptionally active year.

A broad program of courses covered basic airworthiness, inspections, FRP repairs, weight and balance, altimeter testing and propulsion systems.

Among the results were 14 ratings revalidated, 25 new ROC and Annual Inspector ratings and seven Minor Repairs FRP ratings, along with numerous additional qualifications and candidates progressing through training.

That is directly building technical capability within our clubs.

Soaring and Development

Our Coaching Week at Narromine brought together 13 pilots and five coaches from six clubs.

Despite losing several days to weather, participants completed 36 coaching flights, and a number achieved personal bests in both speed and distance.

Perhaps even more importantly, we significantly strengthened our coaching capability during the year.

Eighteen Silver Coach credentials were issued, one was revalidated, and seven instructors received Diamond Coach credentials. That increase was specifically recognised by the National Coaching Manager.

Women's Gliding

Our Women's portfolio has also been extremely active.

Activities included the Women's AEI course, the NSWG/Rockettes task-planning and weather seminar, the inaugural Women's Race Week, Cross-Country Goal Setting training, a dedicated Women's ROC course and Pick a Paddock training.

That activity is particularly significant when considered alongside the 12.5% increase in female membership during the financial year.

It demonstrates exactly what we want our portfolio structure to achieve: funding and volunteer effort being converted into participation, skills and capability within our clubs.

Our Board

We've also continued to strengthen the Board itself.

I would particularly like to welcome two of our newer Directors, Dr Sophie Curio and Neil Bennett.

Sophie brings a wealth of gliding experience and has already provided considerable assistance in the areas of grants and operations.

Neil also brings extensive experience and is applying that knowledge particularly within our Airworthiness portfolio.

They complement what I believe is a very capable Board, with a good combination of professional, governance and practical gliding experience.

Where we go next

Our direction from here is relatively straightforward.

We need to continue building the systems and processes that support our Constitution and allow NSW Gliding to operate effectively.

We need to keep strengthening our relevance and presence within clubs.

We need to continue investing in the development and upskilling of our members.

And above all, we need to keep our attention on participation and membership growth.

The portfolio results I've outlined today demonstrate that we have people doing some excellent work across NSW.

Our job as a Board is to support them, provide the resources and funding where we can, remove unnecessary barriers, and make sure those efforts ultimately translate into stronger clubs and more people participating in gliding.

For me, success over the coming years should be quite measurable: more people participating, more members developing their skills, stronger clubs, and sustained membership growth.

We've made progress over the past 12 months.

Now our challenge is to build on it.

Thank you.