

Owain Johns, BMAA 362, has made the following comment and asked the following questions for consideration at the BMAA 2107 AGM as Any Other Business.

Comment: "A set of strategic and measurable objectives/ annual priorities which need to be adopted by the council and then reported upon by the BMAA at regular intervals throughout the year and reported annually at the AGM - progress towards completion. This is more than just communication. "

Questions:

How will a strategy be 'set' ?

How will the BMAA ensure that its members have its say ?

When will the strategic plan be adopted ?

How will they form part of the BMAA staff job descriptions and annual aims / performance reviews?

When and how will progress to these strategic plans/ annual priorities be reported ?

What will the measurable strategic objectives / priorities be ? If so does the BMAA have them already identified ?

BMAA response by Geoff Weighell, BMAA CEO, on behalf of the BMAA Board of Directors.

Comment:

Comment noted.

Questions:

How will a strategy be 'set' ?

"Strategy" is a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.

The strategy is determined ('set') by the members of the BMAA Board of Directors.

A Strategy Sub-Committee reported to the BMAA Board in 2011 and the Board adopted the proposal that the future direction of the BMAA should be to:

"Support Microlighting in the UK"—retain our status as a specialist interest group for microlighting and microlighters, and seek to provide the best services possible, and seek maximum delegated authority."

This decision determined the policy that the BMAA would adopt for the future at a time when other options had been considered. For example, encouraging diversion into other aircraft types such as gyroplanes.

BMAA policy must serve the intentions of the Objects of the BMAA as set out in the Articles of Association.

There have been formal reviews of this policy against actual activity in 2011 and 2014. During 2017 there has been a further review of performance and priorities which has led to a review of the Objects of the BMAA and some change in emphasis and guidance. The proposed Articles of Association reflect this review.

Work streams to enact the strategy are carried out by the BMAA Staff, Contractors and Volunteers.

How will the BMAA ensure that its members have its say ?

The BMAA is the members, not a remote organisation. Individual members elect their representatives to run the business of the BMAA on their behalf. These representatives are the Directors that form the BMAA Board, also known as the BMAA Council.

Any member has the opportunity to stand for election to the BMAA Board. Members can also be co-opted onto the Board if there are any vacancies.

The contact details for each of the BMAA directors are published in the monthly magazine of the BMAA, *Microlight Flying*. Any member can make contact directly with any one, or all, of the directors to discuss matters pertinent to the running of the BMAA. The directors can then raise those matters with other directors. Communication between directors is not limited to formal Board meetings. It is common practice to communicate between meetings by individual or group email, by telephone or in person.

The BMAA magazine, *Microlight Flying*, is sent to all members every month. The editor has a policy of printing all letters from members, unless they are factually incorrect or libellous. This gives each member the opportunity to express opinions in a place where they may not only be read by the directors, but by all other members. The BMAA Forum also offers the opportunity for members to discuss and express opinions about the management of the BMAA.

The BMAA directors and staff are always open to constructive comment and suggestions from the BMAA membership.

To summarise, the members have a say in that

- they choose their representatives;
- they can be a representative;
- they have direct access to their representatives;
- they are able to communicate with other members through *Microlight Flying* and the BMAA Forum.

When will the strategic plan be adopted ?

This question assumes that there is no strategic plan in place. This assumption is incorrect.

There have been formal reviews of strategy success against actual activity in 2011 and 2014. During 2017 there has been a further review of performance and priorities which has led to a review of the Objects of the BMAA and some change in emphasis and guidance. The proposed Articles of Association reflect this review.

The strategic plan, that is the method of following the policy that satisfies the Objects, is in place, has been followed for some years, and is under continuing review.

How will they form part of the BMAA staff job descriptions and annual aims / performance reviews?

The strategy is the method to achieve the Objects of the BMAA. Work streams to enact the strategy are carried out by the BMAA Staff, Contractors and Volunteers.

The employed BMAA Staff, and Contractors, are individually selected for their knowledge and skills in particular areas. Their specific job descriptions specify the tasks that they are employed to undertake.

Staff performance reviews are carried out annually by the Chief Executive, with reports available to members of the Staff Sub-Committee. The performance review of the Chief Executive is the responsibility of the BMAA Chairman or another director. The BMAA directly employs 8 staff members. The Chief Executive has daily contact with all members of staff and continually makes informal assessments of each staff member's performance.

Department heads carry out mid-year reviews of the staff within their department.

The BMAA is not a manufacturing company making widgets and so reviews based upon numerical productivity are not appropriate. The BMAA is not a retail outlet and so reviews based upon financial activity are not appropriate.

Routine tasks, such as membership renewal, Permit revalidation application response, NPPL application recommendations, general email enquiry responses etc. are all considered as "same day tasks".

Technical applications, regulatory responses and other management matters which are individual and require particular expertise are processed within the best-time-possible. The concept of best-time-possible accepts that priorities may dictate that some tasks take priority over others. Factors such as deadlines set outside the control of the BMAA, commercial expedience, member benefit and availability of expertise are taken into consideration when prioritising tasks.

When and how will progress to these strategic plans/ annual priorities be reported ?

Particular activities that have been completed are reported to the membership as a whole through *Microlight Flying* and the website.

The BMAA Annual Report reports progress and plans for future activity.

The BMAA AGM provides an opportunity for members to discuss reports published within the Annual Report with the members of the Board and BMAA Staff.

What will the measurable strategic objectives / priorities be ? If so does the BMAA have them already identified ?

The question suggests that success by achieving the objectives can be measured, as if by number. This is not generally the case. Taking each of the 15 Objects, as published in the current Articles of Association, individually:

3.1.1 to act as the governing body for the Sport in the Territory;

The BMAA achieves this by the recognition as such by other bodies. The UK Civil Aviation Authority and the Royal Aero Club see the BMAA as the representative of microlight flying within the UK. The LAA has approximately 500 microlight airframes under their engineering approval care and so probably at least that many members who fly microlights, however they are not seen as representing microlighting in any forum.

The BMAA is the representative body within these aviation committees and groups.

- The CAA General Aviation Partnership (CAA GAP)
- The CAA National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC)
- The CAA Airspace Infringement Working Group (AIWG)
- The General Aviation Alliance (GAA)
- The General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC)
- The General Aviation Safety Council (GASCo)
- The Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme (CHIRP)
- The Future Airspace Strategy VFR Implementation Group (FASVIG)
- The All Party Parliamentary Group for General Aviation (APPG GA)

Our success cannot be measured numerically, but our unchallenged involvement demonstrates that there is widespread recognition that the BMAA is the representative body for microlight flying within the UK.

3.1.2 to act as the representative member for the Territory in international affairs and to affiliate to and carry out functions delegated to it by other relevant bodies;

The BMAA achieves this as a member of the Royal Aero Club, which is our direct link to the FAI and Europe Airports, and membership of the European Microlight Federation.

Our success cannot be measured numerically, but our unchallenged involvement demonstrates that there is widespread recognition that the BMAA is the representative body for microlight flying within the UK.

3.1.3 to promote, administer and encourage the development of, and participation in the Sport within the Territory

The BMAA promotes microlight flying within the world of aviation by virtue of its representation as listed in response to 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above. The BMAA also has a website which provides information about microlight flying with information about schools where interested people can find out more and take instruction.

The BMAA publishes a monthly eNews letter which is available to any subscriber free of charge.

The BMAA has attended events where it is considered that its presence at the event can attract people into microlight flying. Experience has demonstrated that attendance at shows is not always an economic method of promotion. The BMAA attendance at a show targeted at participants in outdoor sports in 2017 resulted in an insignificant return for a significant expenditure.

The BMAA uses the flexwing flight simulator as an attractor at events. This generates interest and has proved a useful tool. However, unless supported by an active microlight school that can follow up with interested visitors it is very difficult to measure the full effectiveness.

The BMAA routinely writes for Flyer magazine specifically to promote the work being done by the BMAA.

The BMAA has a Twitter and Facebook page.

The BMAA has advertised a position to enhance the media and promotional presence of the BMAA which is recognised as being in need of improvement.

Measurement of success in numerical terms might be partly served by BMAA membership figures, however as there is no requirement for a microlight pilot to be a member of the BMAA this cannot be relied upon. We know that some pilots do not require services that are provided exclusively to BMAA members, such as engineering services. These same pilots may not want to read Microlight Flying or take advantage of membership financial benefits offered by various retailers and an insurance company. SDR has led to a loss of membership, and many pilots who are part owners of aircraft or hire aircraft may never join the BMAA in the first place. BMAA membership numbers are not a reliable measure of success or failure with regard to this Object. Currently 50% of NPPL applicants are not already BMAA members. These applicants are invite to join when their applications have been processed. Some do, but many don't.

It should also be noted that increasing membership of the BMAA is not one of the Objects and so cannot be considered to be a strategic success or failure.

Better measures of success might be that only a very small minority of members question or criticise the service that they get from the BMAA. Additionally, the lack of nominations for places on the Board of Directors can be interpreted as a thumbs-up from the membership to support how the BMAA is being run. The number of members who express satisfaction with their dealings with the BMAA to members of the BMAA staff during the everyday operation of the BMAA significantly outweighs the number of members expressing dissatisfaction of the management of the BMAA.

3.1.4 to develop and implement a strategy for the development of the Sport in the Territory including strategies for each of: performance at international and national level; national competition; increasing participation; encourage the formation of clubs and schools; and assist in negotiation for new flying sites and protect existing ones;

To encourage participation and skills improvement the BMAA has always been very active in promoting competition in microlight flying. The first competitions were held in 1984 and National Championships have continued since then.

The British Team won the first World Microlight Championships in 1985 and has continued to win many World and European titles ever since. The BMAA supports the British Team members financially by contributing to the event entry fees.

The BMAA has financially supported both World and European competitions run in the UK.

The BMAA has a representative on the FAI microlight commission, CIMA, and is active in promoting change to competition regulation and rules for the benefit of the participants.

Success could be measured by the UK's medal tally, in which case the BMAA is very successful. If measured by the number of participants, this has grown slightly over the last few years, but competitive flying is a niche part of all aviation, with the exception of unpowered flight, and so only a relatively few members can be expected to take part.

Flying sites. The BMAA responds to consultations and offers advice and support with respect to planning applications pertinent to flying sites. Responses are also made to airspace consultations where the proposal may adversely affect microlight flying. Membership of the GAAC provides members with access to planning advice. Membership of the GAA helps coordinate BMAA and other association responses for mutual benefit.

3.1.5 to try to influence the rules, including national and international regulations, pertaining to the conduct of microlight flying for the benefit of the participants;

The BMAA actively participates in proposals for regulatory change. Although not in the gift of the BMAA to make regulation it has exerted significant influence on national regulation for the benefit of microlight pilots. Recent examples are the relaxation of NPPL medical requirements; extending the scope of use of amateur built microlights; and the expansion of SDDR.

Our success can be measured by the improvements in regulations for our benefit, even though we have no regulatory powers.

Strategically we continue to look for ways to reduce or alter regulation for our benefit in all areas. Under current discussion is the potential to change the definition of a microlight by increasing the weight range to allow for a more realistic payload, particularly for three axis microlights. We are active in the attempt to change planning laws to protect airfields; we have responded and influenced the outcome of the Air Navigation Order review in 2016; we responded to influence the Airspace Change Process (CAP 725); we have influenced the outcome of the UK adoption of 8.33 radio channel spacing to retain the frequency used by microlight airfields

3.1.6 to develop a public relations and promotion programme for the Sport in the Territory;

Refer back to some of the comment on 3.1.3. There is certainly room for improvement and the planned appointment of specialist help will address this current shortfall.

3.1.7 to develop a competition programme and co-ordinate competition fixtures across the Territory;

Refer to comment on 3.1.4

3.1.8 to select the representative teams to represent the Territory in international events;

Refer to comment on 3.1.4

3.1.9 to consult and co-operate with other organisations operating in the Sport within the Territory in all matters relating to the administration, promotion and participation in the Sport;

Referring back to an earlier response, we do consult and co-operate, where appropriate, with other organisations. There is no area of recreational aviation where we do not have contact to some degree.

3.1.10 to develop and nurture relationships with, and influence policy of, relevant government departments and European regulatory bodies;

Refer to comment on 3.1.5

3.1.11 to encourage the continued maintenance of standards of training and flying of microlights;

The BMAA is not a regulator and as such cannot mandate flight training requirements or standards. However, the UK CAA takes significant notice of the experience held by the members of the BMAA that make up the Training Committee and the Panel of Examiners.

Through these two bodies which are supported by the BMAA, the flight training syllabus and examinations have been written and tailored to suit the scope of microlight flying. The CAA approve both the syllabus and exams. Throughout 2017 members of the two bodies have been reviewing the syllabus and exams and will be proposing significant updates which will bring the content up to date with current activity.

The BMAA has created an employment post that will improve the link between flight safety initiatives and flight training.

The BMAA is to introduce a pilot's improvement scheme, the BMAA Wings Scheme. This is specifically aimed at improving safety understanding as well as handling skills.

3.1.12 to encourage the continued maintenance of standards in the design, construction, upkeep of microlights and VLA category aircraft.

The standards requirements for the design of microlight aircraft are not in the gift of the BMAA. However, the BMAA Technical Office is in touch frequently with the CAA staff responsible for oversight of microlight aircraft and so can help guide changes in standards for the benefit of BMAA members.

The BMAA Chief Inspector appoints the BMAA Inspectors and monitors their activity throughout each year. Courses for inspectors are developed and run to cover new products.

The Chief Inspector encourages members to take responsibility for the maintenance, both physical and documents, of their own aircraft.

Further courses for members are being developed.

The Technical Office staff write articles for the magazine for the education and interest of members. The three key members of the Technical Office are tasked with writing no less than four articles per year each.

3.1.13 to take such action from time to time as the Board may consider desirable for the benefit of the Sport and the members of the Company;

This object is unquantifiable against a target, but is being acted upon as requirements and opportunity dictate.

3.1.14 to undertake and execute charitable trusts for the benefit of the Sport; and

The BMAA does not have a charitable status and so does not undertake or execute such a trust. However, the BMAA does support GASCo, which is a charity, and did support the Microlight Flying Foundation when it was active.

Although not charitable trusts the BMAA provides educational bursary awards to young people to encourage youth participation, and funds the New Horizons build-a-plane projects which are also aimed at encouraging youth interest in microlight aviation. Both these initiatives have been successful in their aims.

3.1.15 to do all such other things as shall be thought fit to further the interests of the Company or to be incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the objects stated in this Article 3.

This object is unquantifiable against a target, but is being acted upon as requirements and opportunity dictate.

End