

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**PACKAGE**

Glen Buckley

V

Civil Aviation Safety  
Authority  
(CASA)

# MEDIA RELEASE- 19/09/19

## **Small Business Owner loses his Business and home, due to incompetent Government Officer changing his mind.**

Glen Buckley had a vision to build the most professional Flight Training School in Australia and it looked as if it was succeeding, until an individual within the Government agency, CASA changed his mind overnight. Without any prior notice, CASA then placed several restrictions on his ability to conduct his business, ultimately leading to its collapse.

After 15 years of safe, compliant and well-intentioned operations, the effects have been traumatic for Glen, his family, other businesses and associated personnel.

The CASA action has now caused the closure of three businesses, with the associated loss of jobs. Glen has lost his home, his business, his savings, and is now fighting relentlessly to protect his reputation, and minimise the impact on those around him, including not only his own family, but the many businesses, and associated parties affected by this.

No Small Business owner in Australia, should have their business and livelihood destroyed overnight on the whim of a Government employee, and most certainly not under a Government lead by our current PM. Not unless that person within CASA is prepared to publicly justify their decision.

No one can possibly invest in Australian aviation, if a 15 year established, well intentioned, safe and compliant business can be destroyed without warning.

To this day, Glen is at a loss as to the reason why his world was turned upside down. CASA have been unwilling to clearly and concisely state what he did wrong, if in fact he doesn't even know if he did anything wrong?

Glen does know that the CASA action was NOT made on matters of safety, and there were no regulatory breaches.

After one year of trying to find out exactly why this happened, CASA still refuse to explain or justify their actions. Some of the personnel within CASA responsible for this matter have "resigned" but those that remain must be held to account.

He has elected to fight back on this matter, gaining a groundswell of opinion and support from the aviation industry and fair-minded people. His complaints have been sent as high as the Prime Minister's office and contains substantive ethical allegations against 4 personnel within CASA that impact on the safety of aviation in Australia and go to the very core of good governance in Government Departments.

This is quite literally the David V Goliath story, for the future of Australian owned Small Business in the Aviation sector.

A Crowd Funding page has been established on his behalf, which will reach its goal over coming days. Comments from donors indicate the high level of emotion credited to this matter. You are encouraged to view it, and the associated comments. The associated link, follows.

On reaching the goal of \$50,000 Glen will be taking this matter on the path of a legal but public determination and hold CASA to account, for the impact caused by CASAs unconscionable conduct.

The matter is gaining significant momentum. More than 250,000 views by industry peers, on a website referred to as Pprune. The associated link follows.

This is a matter that is not going away. It is growing momentum rapidly and gaining wide industry support. Glens wife and children are depending on him, but so are many other businesses that have been bullied and intimidated by CASA in the past.

He is fully committed to making a stand on this matter.

Glen is well versed in the facts and looking for to the opportunity to present his allegations to the Australian Public via a media outlet that is prepared to present a sincere balanced story, where CASA is also presented the opportunity to defend their action

Glen can be contacted preferably by email [defendapta@gmail.com](mailto:defendapta@gmail.com), or secondary preferred contact 0418772013

## **Essential relevant attachments**

APTA Before CASA action.

APTA after CASA action.

Letter to PM sent 25/08 contained above.

Prime Ministers Speech to IPA 19/08/19

## **Additional relevant material-links**

### **Crowd funding page**

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/glen-buckley-v-casa>.

### **Pilot chat forum (in excess of 250,000 views)**

<https://www.pprune.org/australia-new...ss-v-casa.html>

The PMs address to the Institute of Public Administration 19/08/19

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/speech-institute-public-administration>

The Ministers Statement of Expectations

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L00288>

CASAs Regulatory Philosophy

<https://www.casa.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/our-regulatory-philosophy>

The PGPA Act

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013A00123>

LETTER TO GLADYS LIU  
MEMBER FOR  
CHISHOLM

Glen Buckley  
6 Susan Court  
Mount Waverley 3149

19/09/19

Ms Gladys Liu  
Member- House of Representatives  
Chisholm Electorate.

Dear Ms Liu,

My name is Glen Buckley, I have lived in Mount Waverley for 54 years, and I am writing to you as my Member of Parliament seeking your assistance.

I have previously sent correspondence to the Prime Minister. That correspondence related to matters of aviation safety in Australia, and substantive allegations of malpractice amongst certain individuals within CASA.

As that correspondence has not been acknowledged or responded to in any manner, I am seeking your assistance.

Can you please forward the following correspondence to the PM for his personal attention.

May I respectfully request confirmation that has been done.

If you can facilitate these two requests, I would be most appreciative.

Thanking you in anticipation of your assistance.



Respectfully, Glen Buckley,

E. [defendapta@gmail.com](mailto:defendapta@gmail.com) M. 0418772013

*The following letter to the Prime Minister, resubmitted via Ms Gladys Liu (Member for Chisholm) 19/09/19 due no response from PM to letter sent 25/08/19.*

Glen Buckley  
6 Susan Court  
Mount Waverley 3149

25/08/19

Dear Prime Minister,

My name is Glen Buckley. I write to you with 25 years' experience in pilot training in various roles, most recently as a CASA approved CEO, and CASA approved Head of Operations (HOO).

Over the last 15 years I have operated my own large flight training business, and CASA records will indicate those operations have delivered industry leading levels of safety and compliance, and they have been well intentioned.

I write to respectfully inform you of substantive allegations that I am making against four personnel within the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

This correspondence is not vexatious, and the matters are not trivial. I will have no difficulty in establishing the facts of the matter, and I have well documented evidence readily available to present against every single allegation I make below.

I am making allegations of improper, wrongful and unlawful conduct against four CASA employees.

The four CASA personnel have clearly made decisions and demonstrated conduct that is outside of policy, directions and the law. Specifically, I refer to Requirements of Administrative Law outlined in CASA's own manuals and procedures and specifically CASA's Enforcement Manual. The Ministers Statement of Expectations and CASAs own Regulatory Philosophy.

The conduct of those four personnel within CASA has measurably and demonstrably reduced aviation safety.

I allege they have demonstrated unconscionable conduct and made decisions that a well-intentioned person would not make, if they were making decisions on the basis of safety and compliance.

They have not acted with honesty and integrity, they have not acted with care and diligence, and they have not acted with respect and courtesy. They have acted in a bullying and intimidating manner.

I allege those personnel have not used public and Commonwealth resources in a proper manner and have made deliberate decisions that have in fact misused substantial public resources.

I allege those four personnel have made calculated decisions that have caused detriment to my business, and other businesses and that they have deliberately avoided attempts to work collaboratively and resolve issues.

I allege that their decisions and actions potentially bring harm to the integrity and good reputation of their fellow Employees and CASA in general, which can only degrade safety.

I allege that one of those four personnel has improperly used inside information.

I have been attempting to resolve this matter with CASA since October 2018. Three businesses have already closed, with an associated loss of jobs. It is likely that more businesses will be closed in the near future.

This matter is also negatively impacting on safety.

The matter is also receiving greater industry attention, with an article in Australian Flying magazines recently, which I have attached.

A pilot's forum on the subject has in excess of 250,000 views.

<https://www.pprune.org/australia-new-zealand-pacific/620219-glen-buckley-australian-small-business-v-casa.html>

A Crowdfunding page has also been created on my behalf. The target is \$50,000 in order to initiate a legal investigation. I anticipate that goal being achieved shortly, and the response has been overwhelming. This can be monitored via the following link.  
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/glen-buckley-v-casa>

The purpose of this letter:

May I respectfully request that you nominate the appropriate person to meet with myself, and Mr Shane Carmody, the CEO of CASA or his nominee/s. All I ask is that your nominee, is well intentioned and shares your vision for the Public Service.

At that meeting I request the opportunity to present my allegations to Mr Carmody in the presence of your nominee and provide well documented supporting evidence.

If at the end of that meeting my claims were found to be vexatious or unsubstantiated, I would expect to be held fully accountable in law.

Thank you for considering my request,

Yours respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Glen Buckley', written in a cursive style.

Glen Buckley



# **APTA BEFORE CASA ACTION**

# Forging a New Alliance



Glen Buckley has a lot of expertise in his team at APTA. From left to right: Group Head of Safety Andrew Warland-Browne, Group Head of Operations Ermin Javier Jr, Standby Head of Operations Jacqui Armstrong, CEO Glen Buckley and Internal Co-ordinator Laveniya Ruthalingam.

A new style of training organisation, the Australia Pilot Training Alliance, is providing a fast and efficient path to CASA approvals for flying schools. As **Steve Hitchen** found out, their very existence has enabled some to expand and others simply to keep the doors open.

There are any number of people in the aviation community happy to tell you what's wrong with the industry, but very rarely does someone come up with a truly innovative solution that can genuinely be labeled as a "game changer".

Glen Buckley is one person who has, and he's literally bet his house on the outcome.

Buckley is the owner of Melbourne Flight Training (MFT), a small but flourishing school at Moorabbin. MFT had its niche, and with quality, smart training as a weapon, gathered

new business purely through word of mouth. MFT was never going to rake in wads of cash for Buckley, but it did OK and provided employment for several flying instructors.

Then came the day that the CASA threatened to wipe out all of that simply with a change of rules that excluded MFT, and many other flying schools, from 95% of the Commercial Pilot Licence training market. CASA announced CASR Part 142, a complex and costly form of flying school approval that had at its heart the 150-hour CPL course. It



was exclusive to Part 142, so if you didn't have the capital to step up and invest, you were simply out of business.

The aftershocks of Part 142 are still rippling throughout the aviation industry with destructive force, and at the end, only the strongest will still be standing, with the weakest relegated to scrambling for the 200-hour CPL market; a much less attractive option for potential students.

"CASA said 'Right, the 200-hour CPL lives here with the Part 141 schools, and the 150-hour CPL becomes the exclusive domain of the Part 142 organisations,'" Buckley recalls. "But my business gets 95% of its income from the 150-hour CPL,

the flying schools, and it is the extra salaries needed that have proven the largest stumbling block for schools to go forward.

That's where APTA comes into it: they provide an Air Operator's Certificate approved to Part 142 and the expertise required to maintain all the manuals and oversight needed to comply with CASA regulations. Smaller flying schools join the alliance and share the resources. Arm-in-arm they go forward to tackle the 150-hour CPL market together.

"The reason I took all this on is that we had a situation where a Part 142 school could offer the 150-hour PPL and a Part 141 school could not," Buckley points out, "but in actual fact, the

went through the onerous process of getting approval for MFT. However, he understood that it wouldn't be sustainable, and so created APTA to share the load and give other small schools an easier path to CASA approval.

"I moved the Part 142 approval over to APTA, as well as the RTO [Registered Training Authority] and the CRICOS [Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students]. Then I went after the very best people possible to fill the key roles," Buckley recalls.

Buckley has chosen his team astutely, with former Philippine Air Force and Royal Australian Navy officer Ermin Javier taking the key role of Group Head of Operations. Javier's job is effectively group CFI, which means that alliance members don't need a CFI of their own, relying instead on Senior Base Pilots to provide on-the-spot oversight.

Similarly, the appointment of former CASA educator and safety advisor Andrew Warland-Browne as Group Head of Safety has provided APTA with the horsepower to cascade the central safety management

system down to the group members, and with former Qantas operational manager Wes Mason running the documentation system and technical services, Buckley has put together a powerful team at APTA.

And to top it off, even CASA is impressed.

"Despite me being probably the hardest person CASA's ever had to deal with, they are extremely supportive of the concept," Buckley says with a wry smile. "Why? Every school puts their own spin on Part 142, so CASA has to walk into 10 different organisations and do 10 different audits. At APTA, all members run a system called Flight School Manager and it's all paperless.

"Everything from flying hours to maintenance tracking goes into this, which makes it a very powerful oversight tool. Now, we can monitor all group members from head office, and that's why CASA supports the concept."

## "APTA has opened doors for us that would normally have been closed"

and on 1 September 2017, the privilege was going to be taken away from my business overnight. It was destined for absolute destruction; there was no way in the world it could survive on Part 141 only."

Buckley is not the sort of person that you'll see taking a lot of steps backward, so in the spirit of "if you can't beat them, join them," he set out to find a way that MFT could stay in the Part 142 market, and on his journey, developed a solution not only for MFT, but for other schools in the same predicament.

He called his solution the Australian Pilot Training Alliance (APTA), and it's now one of the very few training organisations that has Part 142 approval from CASA.

### Getting it together

When asked about APTA, Buckley most often falls back on the "IGA" analogy: it's like a group of independent businesses banding together for mutual benefit to take on industry giants.

Part 142's largest burden is the need for top-end staff to service

same instructor could teach at both schools, and deliver exactly the same subjects out of exactly the same manual of standards. Then you get the same testing officer in to test both candidates to identical standards. So why does one business get forced into making one candidate fly an extra 50 hours?"

The paradox is that Buckley believes that the 150-hour CPL is actually a good product, and



LEFT: TVSA Flight Training at Bacchus Marsh used APTA as a fast-track to Part 142.

ABOVE: Under the new rules, Part 141 schools can offer CPL candidates the 200-hour syllabus only.





It has been a bug-bear of CASA for many years that some arrangements between flying schools—"lending" an AOC—has resulted in remote oversight that has proven several times to be the equivalent of no oversight. According to Buckley, the software and systems within the APTA group mean they can show effective oversight of all members ... and that makes CASA very happy indeed.

### Joining up

At the time *Australian Flying* spoke with Buckley, APTA had five members: MFT, TVSA Flight Training, Learn to Fly, Avia Aviation and Flight Standards. There were more knocking on the door as the realities of Part 142 began to bite, but the APTA concept can be scaled up to cope with many more schools coming on board.

Avia Aviation Co-founding Director Charles Gunter committed his company to APTA once he considered that doing so would be to Avia's advantage.

"I'm ecstatically excited about this," he said with a huge grin. "I wish we'd done this long ago.

"Undoubtedly APTA has opened doors for us that would normally have been closed. And there are probably more doors out there that we haven't knocked on.

"The potential upside is enormous for potentially less overhead cost. If you look at the human resources that went into our original AOC, and the changes we had to make for Part 61 and Part 141, I estimate that we spent well north of \$250,000 to achieve those objectives.

"Now our overhead cost with APTA is probably one third of that."

But for schools looking to join APTA, there is one painful duty they have to perform: they must mothball their own AOC, the one they spent a lot of money to get and many long hours making sure they keep. The great advantage to doing that, it that they inherit quality staff from APTA instead.

"We've always been impressed with Glen as an individual, and

also we were surprised at the calibre of people within APTA," Gunter said. "They are people who have a track record in excellence in whatever they're doing. That really impressed the heck out of me!"

APTA membership also brings another opportunity: check and training. Not only is the 150-hour CPL the exclusive privilege of a Part 142 school, but also the right to conduct check and training for charter aircraft over 5700 kg MTOW. Flying schools with charter AOCs have traditionally been approved for this function, but if they stay at Part 141 level, they'll have to farm that out to a Part 142 organisation. Through the APTA membership, there is now opportunity for Avia to branch into the check and training market.

And there is another advantage that current Chief Flying Instructors will immediately relate to.

Avia Senior Base Pilot Darren Schmidt is a Grade 1 instructor with MECIR approval and Flight Examiner Rating. He should

be sitting behind a CFI's desk snowed under with paperwork, but instead, all that is taken care of by Javier at APTA, freeing up Schmidt to spend more time teaching people to fly.

"I'm getting so much more time in aeroplanes now," Schmidt said, "which means I can oversee the students and other instructors so much better. My logbook is looking a lot more healthy nowadays!"

### Growth in progress

Perhaps one of the more surprising schools to jump on the APTA train is Learn to Fly. The Moorabbin-based school is recreational only, and so can't benefit from anything that Part 142 brings. However, if you draw back that curtain, there is a clever decision behind it.

School Operations Manager Kai Li has big plans for Learn to Fly, and APTA membership is a key part. The company has facilities also in Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai, and a large expansion into the general aviation training market is planned for Moorabbin. Already they have building approval for a 4400-sqm base to train 60-80 students at one time, and the expansion plans will utilise the best advantages of APTA membership: Part 142, CRICOS, RTO and shared resources.

"We do mainly recreational flying here, but our pilots have been doing some GA flying through MFT," Li points out. "Our target is now students from overseas who want to do CPL, but you can't do CPL on RAAus aircraft [for the 150-hour syllabus], so we needed to get into GA flying.

"We tried to buy an Air Operator's Certificate to get into the market, but the price was going to be too much. And even if we bought one, we wouldn't have the expertise to run it. So it was better to join APTA rather than run our own school."

The economics of APTA also made a lot of sense to Li. The membership fee of \$80,000



looks steep at first, but when you consider the cost of the alternative, it starts to look more like a bargain.

"It's not that much from my point of view," Li reckons. "If I hire a GA CFI I would pay them that much anyway, so why not pay that money to APTA? It saves my time, gives me the Part 142 approval, RTO, CRICOS, management systems and access to the resources of the group."

Learn to Fly has plans for its own GA fleet to be housed in the new training complex, but in the meantime, they can fall back on the resources of other group

in place. APTA had all those personnel, plus all the systems and procedures in place ready for us.

"At the same time we were going through a change of CFI and Chief Pilot. Joining APTA meant we could transition to Part 142 pretty easily without having to go through the whole CASA approval process."

But as a business person, Pearson also appreciates that APTA membership can provide more benefits than just the training approvals.

"I think one of the big advantages is that there is other people within the group that we

"We would have still made the transition, but it would have been much more difficult and taken a lot longer."

## Forging ahead

Buckley sees APTA as an opportunity that goes beyond simply flying school management; his vision includes using the brand as a powerful marketing tool for members.

"We have an Australian-owned product that actually has more capability than anyone else in the country," he stresses. "APTA can offer every single course CASA has approved. Our Head of Operations brings to table multi-crew ATPL flight testing, and most large flying schools can't say that!"

"So if we can go overseas with the APTA brand, we've got a multi-base, Australian-owned business that does everything that any other organisation can do.

"Provided we keep this well-intentioned and keep investing up

top here, I think we'll kick goals."

In future, there may be even be scope for Part 141 flying schools and aero clubs to jump on the band wagon, in the process immediately boosting their own capability and potential. One of the problems plaguing country operations is attracting qualified CFIs to replace those that have moved on. In many cases, schools have had to temporarily cease operations whilst they hunted a replacement that was not only qualified and approved, but also was prepared to move to a regional area. APTA membership can provide the solution quickly and easily.

"I think this is an opportunity for rural areas," Buckley predicts. "APTA will bring a capability to flying schools that they've never had before, and they're never going to get unless they come together like this."

"If APTA can help keep a flying school in business, I would love them to come to us, because that's truly what we're about."

## "We have an Australian-owned product that actually has more capability than anyone else in the country"

members to realise their ambitions short-term. Planes can be cross-hired; instructors can be allocated from one school to another and their skills, expertise and training with them.

For an organisation starting from scratch in GA training, Learn to Fly's decision to go with APTA can't have been that difficult: everything they needed would come in one neat package.

## Fast track to Part 142

TVSA Flight Training at Bacchus Marsh found themselves not only on the Part 142 outer, but also down one critical person: a Chief Flying Instructor. For Director/owner Dan Pearson, the decision to join APTA solved more than one issue.

"We joined APTA because they are a Part 142 approved organisation, and we hadn't yet transitioned ourselves to 142, so they provide all the approvals we need for all the types of training we deliver," Pearson told *Australian Flying*.

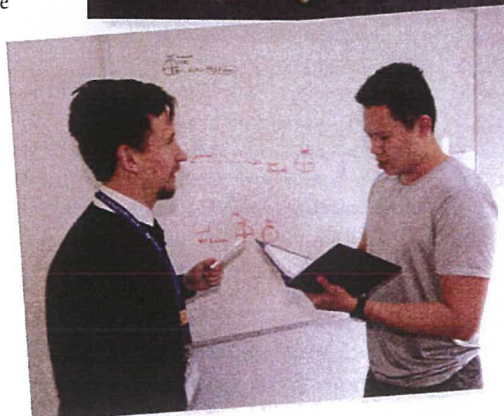
"We wanted to make sure we had the best of both worlds [Part 141 and Part 142] and that we had the right key personnel

can get access to. For example, whilst we might not do multi-crew training today, there are people in the group that we can use to gain that capability.

"Also, if we need resources or other people within the group need resources, they can borrow planes or instructors from us, so it's kind of like a sharing of resources and people."

TVSA was facing the same brick wall currently before the eyes of many flying schools around Australia: either shell out the money and time to get your own Part 142 approval, stay at Part 141 and forego a large market, or join in with someone like APTA. Pearson chose the latter, but if the APTA option wasn't there, he and his team had a lot of hard work ahead of them.

"We would have had to put a lot more emphasis on transitioning to Part 142 ourselves and we would have had to employ staff sooner than we wanted to, so APTA gave us some breathing space to employ them on our terms rather than those dictated by industry."



ABOVE: Learn to Fly's Kai Li has big plans for expansion, helped along by APTA membership.

LEFT: With APTA oversight, Learn to Fly will be able to offer the 150-hour CPL to overseas students.

# APTA AFTER CASA ACTION



# Breakdown

Are they approved or not? In this story of regulatory confusion, **Steve Hitchen** outlines how CASA helped to set up a flight training organisation with Part 141 and 142 approvals only to then cast doubt over whether or not it actually complied.

Glen Buckley bet his house on CASA.

It was a huge risk, but he saw a market for an innovative type of flying training organisation tailored directly to the new and onerous requirements of CASR Part 142. In order to get it right, Buckley enlisted the help of CASA to write the many manuals and address the 600 dot-points the regulator needed to issue a Part 142 approval. What more can you do than have the people who are going to approve the organisation effectively help to set it up in accordance with the regulations?

Buckley's company, the Australian Pilot Training Alliance (APTA) was one of only 5% of flying schools ready to go the day CASA flicked the switch on Part 142. It had been a lot of work, but they opened their doors to the congratulations of a regulator that was heavily involved in making sure APTA was 100% compliant.

Late last year, the very same CASA that approved APTA effectively reversed their decision, stating that APTA should never have been allowed to get as far as it did, even though the journey was facilitated by CASA almost every step of the way.

Glen Buckley bet his house on CASA ... and lost.

## Death by 600 paper cuts

For many flying schools, CASR Part 142 was bombshell regulation. One of CASA's cornerstone rule suites, it lays down the law for delivering integrated training for the Commercial Pilots Licence (CPL). Directed mainly at flying academies, it demands schools operate under a management regime the equivalent of a small bureaucracy, complete with the

schools to operate under Part 142 or in some cases, Part 141. Head of Operations (CFI), safety management, co-ordination; all taken care of for an annual fee.

It was innovation that Buckley wasn't sure CASA would come at, so he got them involved from the outset.

"Becoming a Part 142 flying school is a very significant project," Buckley says. "In the design of APTA, we attended to CASA's 600 individual dot-point items. I sat down with CASA

## "without any warning, APTA's world came crashing down."

added costs of doing so. The quid-pro-quo is that Part 142 schools alone can deliver the in-demand 150-hour CPL and conduct check and training.

Buckley had another idea, one which would enable his flying school Melbourne Flight Training (MFT) to stay afloat and also act as rescuer for other schools teetering on the brink of pulling the plug. APTA is described in detail in Australian Flying January-February 2018, but in precis, it provided management services to the schools that had no chance of putting their own in place, thus enabling those

with the APTA concept; they had full knowledge of what we were doing. We spent years attending to those 600 dot points and writing our exposition in conjunction with CASA.

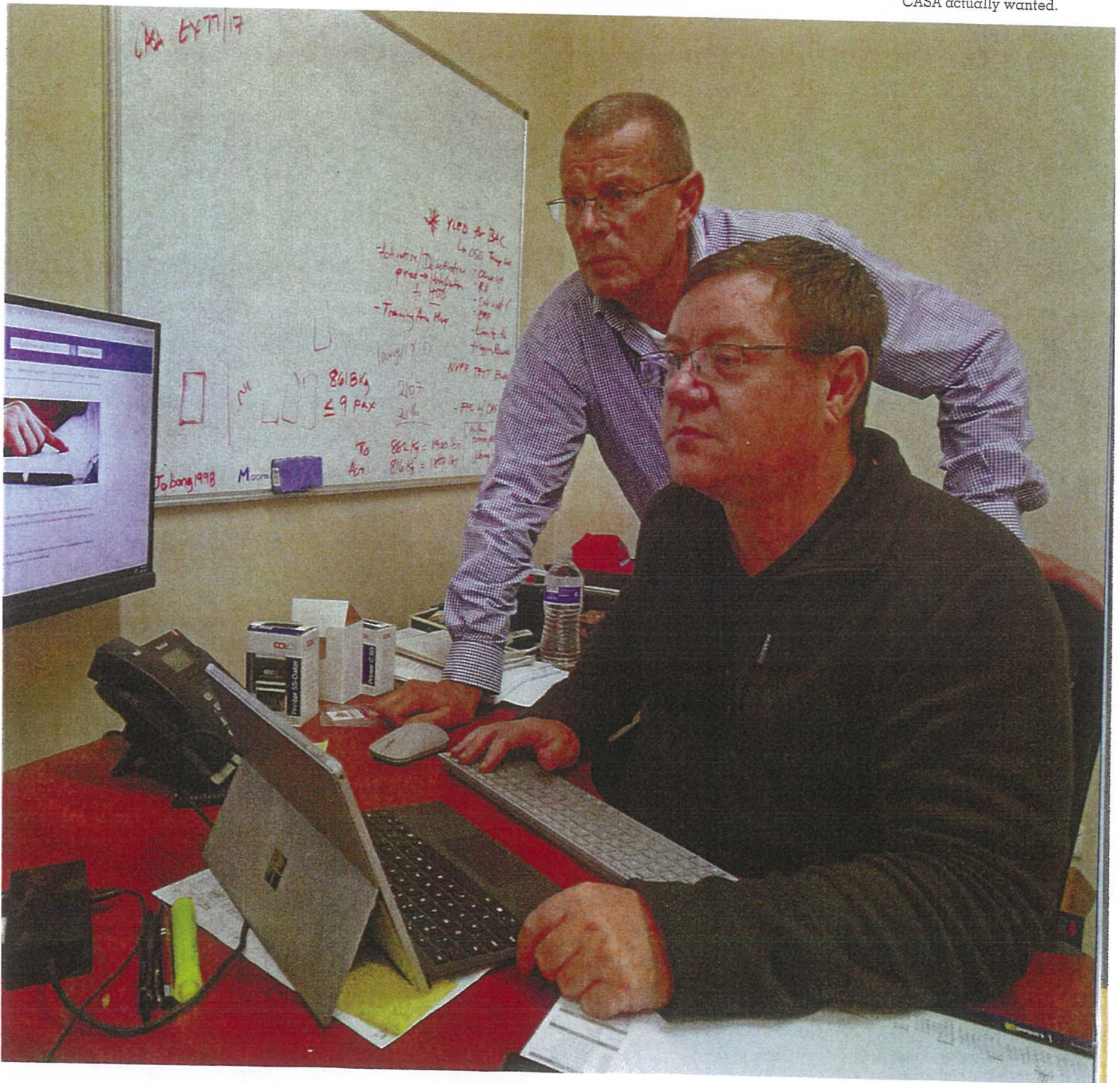
"CASA was very supportive. They made comments to other flying schools that Glen Buckley was the first person in Australia that actually understood what a Part 142 was. CASA agrees; they have said that they were integral in the design of APTA."

The CASA involvement in APTA was so deep and vital that in April 2017, Buckley wrote to Aviation Group manager





Glen Buckley and Group Head of Safety Andrew Warland-Browne (seated) spent countless hours trying to figure out what CASA actually wanted.







Graeme Crawford expressing his appreciation to the Southern Region team.

"Every person involved in the process was nothing less than exceptional," Buckley wrote. "I do appreciate that some direction did come from your office, and that required a number of CASA personnel to redirect their efforts. Could I respectfully request that you pass my thanks down the line."

Crawford replied with "I know it has been a long and stressful journey for you and I truly hope you can now enjoy the destination. Congratulations to you and your team."

## The system works

APTA proved an immediate success. The concept of sharing the cost burden of the CASA-mandated bureaucracy showed benefits for companies such as Avia Aviation, Learn to Fly, Simjet and Buckley's own Melbourne Flight Training. Using common procedures and software, APTA Head of Operations Ermin Javier was able to extend his oversight to the member companies, ensuring those operations could continue to offer the precious 150-hour CPL and check and training services.

On 1 September 2018, at the end of a 12-year project and a one-year delay, CASA flicked the switch on Parts 141 and 142. Simply, if a school wasn't approved

by then options for continued existence were not very numerous. Several turned to APTA as their only real choice, whilst others had seen the benefits from a long way off and were on the APTA bus nearly from the outset.

In a world where flying schools straddle the divide between a training organisation and a business, accidental non-compliance with regulations is more common than you'd think. APTA put an end to that for members. Whilst the school concentrated on attracting customers and delivering a quality product, APTA's management team had their back when it came to compliance and safety.

Aero clubs that were traditionally restricted training to PPLs and 200-hour CPLs saw immediate advantages as well. Plagued by the constant battle to attract and keep Chief Flying Instructors, aero clubs turned to APTA.

Ballarat Aero Club (BAC) had their own Part 141 approval, but keeping it alive was proving too much of a strain on the club. The answer was to join APTA.

"APTA gave us an opportunity to be a Part 142 school and give us access to more instructors, more aircraft, more capability and we could then service our students to a greater degree without it costing us an arm and a leg," says BAC president Eddie Kuyper.

Ballarat Aero Club has been in existence for more than 50 years, and experienced a resurgence under the APTA umbrella.

"Suddenly, the club became more vibrant because the people APTA was sending us offered so much more. People were coming from further afield and they loved the club atmosphere and so our flying hours increased significantly. Students were achieving PPLs, endorsements, CPLs, instructor ratings, multi-engine IFR ...

"We've bought a flight simulator and have more aircraft on line; we've really gone ahead and it put a real buzz into the place."

Then, without any warning, APTA's world came crashing down.

## The letter

When Glen Buckley ripped open the envelope from CASA he had no idea the tear was going to extend to his heart. Dated 23 October 2018, the letter outlined the regulator's proposal to refuse to allow new bases to be added to the APTA Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) and calling into question the legality of the bases that CASA had already approved.

Rewind time. The plaudits Buckley had sent through to Crawford were aimed at CASA's Southern Region Certification Management Team 2 (CMT2). This is the crew that did all the hard work to get APTA their Part 142, and the team that did a complete Level 1 audit in November 2017 and found no problems.

In May 2018, APTA was informed that it was being switched to CMT3, a team that had had nothing to do with APTA to that point.

"The next thing that happened, with absolutely no prior notice at all ... I got an extremely heavy-handed letter that made two allegations against me," Buckley says with great incredulity. "The first one was that I was in breach of the aviation national ruling, and that the second one was that my procedure for opening up my temporary locations was in breach of the regulations."

The heart-wrenching letter of 23 October effectively was CMT3 contradicting everything that CMT2 had approved.

The national aviation ruling. Signed in 2006 by then Director of Aviation Safety Bruce Byron, it is an advisory document the prevents CAR 206 (commercial) operators from franchising out their AOC to other operators. Initially, CAR 206 included flight training, but CASA removed flight training from CAR 206 in September of 2014.

It should have been a slam-dunk: as a flight training organisation, APTA was not bound by the ruling. However, it took Glen Buckley nine weeks to get CASA to admit that the ruling did, in fact, not apply to flight training. Further mud was added to the water when it became apparent that the temporary base procedure APTA adopted was CASA's own procedure.





Glen Buckley: "The regional manager said to me that 'I've had legal advice that the temporary procedure isn't intended for flying schools.' That's bullshit! It's actually in CASA's how-to manual for Part 141/142 guidance material.

"So we had a situation where CASA has suggested I used the temporary location procedure, given me the temporary location procedure, I've put it into my manuals exactly as they gave it to me, they approved it, they've approved bases under it and done a Level 1 audit on the whole thing. Then I get a letter after the change to CMT3 that tells me I'm operating illegally for using it!"

The two allegations were seriously undermined, but CASA immediately raised another issue: contracts. CASA gave Buckley seven days to produce commercial contracts between APTA and its customers, after which CASA would make a "final determination" on the consequences of the letter.

But CASA already had the contracts and had had them for months, and no final determination has, to date, eventuated. CASA began approving APTA on a three-month basis only, driving them into a very damaging limbo. Without a secure future, APTA was not able to attract new clients

and several schools that had already signed on were forced to re-evaluate their positions.

Buckley was faced with outgoings of \$10,000 per week and no income of any certainty. The issue, whatever it really was, had to be resolved fast.

## When is an audit not an audit?

The APTA model relied on new bases being added to the AOC. The concept worked best for Part 142 schools, but had Part 141 schools salivating as well. In particular, three joined the group: Ballarat Aero Club, Latrobe Valley Aero Club and White Star Aviation in Ballina, NSW. The regulations required CASA to process Significant Change Requests on APTA's AOC. After visits to BAC and LVAC, CASA informed Buckley that they were refusing to allow the schools to be added. The reason is still unclear, given CASA had used the aviation national ruling on CAR 206 as the basis for the evaluation, which was not the correct document to use.

In writing, CASA stated that it found evidence of flight and duty times being exceeded at LVAC; however, Buckley's requests to see the evidence did not bear any fruit. More curiously, APTA had not been given any

APTA set up a base at Moorabbin, which housed the management staff leveraged out to member companies.



audit results at all as required by CASA's own process.

But CASA had an answer: the visits were part of the change approval process and not a Level 2 audit; therefore, there was no obligation to supply Buckley with the results. After intervention from Peter White, CASA's Executive Manager of Regulatory Services, Buckley was made privy to the results of the LVAC "audit."

"There was a complete contrast between the exit interview on-site and what we were told were the issues," Buckley says. "I had a meeting in the head office at CASA, which was completely different from the on-site interview. A week later CASA actually produced the audit results, months after the audit happened, not dated, obviously written up after the head office meeting and now they're completely different: there's 10 allegations of regulatory breaches that I've never seen before!"

Buckley's rat-smelling faculties went into over-drive. It seemed to him that the breaches were fabricated after the head-office meeting and not part of the original audit. It came to light that CASA's legal team was asked for an opinion that APTA was in fact illegal. It prompted Buckley to make a Freedom of Information (FOI) claim on the CASA auditors' original notes. In response, CASA FOI Officer David Gobbit supplied Buckley with eight pages of documents 100% redacted. Big

black blobs are what Buckley got. CASA had escaped because they considered the information was legally privileged and therefore exempt under the FOI act.

## Back to the contracts

CASA soon switched back to the contracts as the issue. In response to Buckley's assurance that he would do anything CASA wanted to get APTA's full approval back, White provided necessary wording that would for all intents satisfy the regulator. But it seems even that wasn't enough.

"I took CASA's wording in its entirety and put it into the contracts. For some reason that wasn't acceptable and they came back with an alternative set of guidance material, which I fully adopted into my contracts. They wrote to me and said it was fine. Hours later I got another e-mail that retracted that. They then outsourced that to an external legal firm and came back with a third set of guidance material.

"I read their guidance material and I had already covered all of that in my contracts! It shows me that CASA has got no idea. The things they asked me to do were already happening at APTA. This just supports my contention that they don't know enough about APTA because they haven't asked."

CASA was asking for more without making it clear what "more" actually was. In the meantime, APTA began to wither on the vine commercially because

LVAC sought to join the APTA group, but after an "audit" CASA refused to approve the base.





CASA wouldn't offer an approval beyond three months and Buckley himself was plunged into a financial abyss.

### Taking on city hall

Buckley was presented with a brick wall to climb, but he pulled up his boots and set about the task. He bombarded CASA with e-mails exercising his right to answers. He asked for supporting documentation for CASA's contentions, he asked for details of the alleged breaches, he made sure CASA knew what the financial impact on APTA was, he made multiple official requests to allow the new members to start operating, he asked several times for a change of CMT, echoing his original reservations about CMT3.

CASA's response was to not respond. By March 2019, five months after all this started, it was still going on. Up to that point, Buckley had expressed

a desire to resolve the issue amicably, but it seemed the only way forward was to go hard. He turned to Industry Complaints Commissioner Jonathon Hanton and submitted 28 matters for investigation. It included a failure on CASA's behalf to achieve clear and concise regulations, breaches of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, breaches of CASA's own

### "Is the APTA model legal as it was originally approved or not?"

regulatory philosophy, CASA's refusal to substantiate allegations, a failure to act in accordance with the minister's *Statement of Expectations* and CASA's misuse of the CAR 206 aviation ruling. There were a lot more.

At the time of writing, Hanton had not released the official conclusions from his

investigation, but portions of a preliminary report that passed over the desk of *Australian Flying* seemed to indicate that Hanton was coming down more on the side of APTA than CASA.

Hanton dismissed several complaints, but said this on the subject of fair treatment.

"I don't consider CASA treated APTA fairly when its approach changed on 23 October," Hanton

wrote. "That's because collectively as an organisation, CASA had an awareness of the APTA business model for a significant period of time prior to its compliance with regulation being called into question. In changing its position so drastically, the circumstances were such that CASA's actions weren't fair, given APTA's likely

to have relied on CASA's failure to highlight any concerns when conducting its operations and planning."

### CASA's view

Between 31 May and 6 June this year, *Australian Flying* sent CASA 37 specific questions relating to the way they have dealt with APTA. Despite originally agreeing to provide information as requested, none of these questions were ever answered. Requests for interviews with CEO Shane Carmody and Stakeholder Engagement Manager Rob Walker were also turned down. Instead, CASA offered this simple statement.

APTA was granted its flying training authorisations (under CASR Part 141 and Part 142) in 2016/17 following a significant collaboration with CASA in the development of suitable operations manuals.

At the time, CASA had assessed

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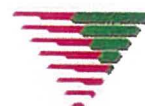
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that APTA key personnel did in fact have full operational control of activities being conducted at Moorabbin and Bacchus Marsh. The same assessment was made when APTA sought two additional Moorabbin facilities in 2017.

In June 2018, APTA sought to expand its operations significantly to Ballarat and Latrobe Valley. During CASA's review of those requests, it became apparent that they were for independent business entities that had significant operational autonomy.

Since that time, CASA has sought to assist APTA in establishing appropriate arrangements with its affiliated organisation to ensure that its safety accountabilities under the regulations could be effectively discharged.

At the time of writing, CASA has stated that it has been waiting for Buckley to provide information so they can lift the three-month approval, but according to Buckley, everything they are asking for is already in

the APTA manuals. Is this a case of stone-walling until CASA gets their way via the complete surrender of the opponent? The lack of information from CASA makes assessment very difficult.

### The breakdown

Sorting through all the available documentation leads not to clarity, but to frustration and confusion. However, three basic questions precipitate from analysis.

1. Is the APTA model legal as it was originally approved or not?
2. Are CASA's CMTs properly trained and competent enough to have full knowledge of the CASRs and the intent of the regulations?
3. Why has CASA elected to answer none of the questions posed by an episode that can only be described as a cruel fiasco?

Buckley is still waiting on one thing: a determination from CASA that the structure of APTA as CASA assisted in setting up is


Buckley is not a person to go gently into the good night as he demonstrated to CASA at an industry summit at Tamworth in 2016.



either legal or not legal. There has been nothing forthcoming from the regulator. There is no getting around the question of the integrity of either CMT2 or CMT3: if one was right, the other was wrong, and either way such disparity of opinion within the same office is concerning.

Glen Buckley no longer owns APTA. It was sold for the value of the debts accrued, which means that the company itself was

valueless in monetary terms. In real terms, APTA could have been the most valuable asset the Australian general aviation industry had. It could also have been a great asset for CASA because the systems it offered were superior to other AOC-sharing models.

No doubt CASA will be wanting the whole APTA thing to quietly go away, but no-one has ever accused Glen Buckley of going gentle into the good night. 

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# PMs SPEECH TO THE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

19/08/19

## **SPEECH TO THE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, 19<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019**

**PRIME MINISTER:** *Thank you very much Martin.*

*Can I also join you in welcoming my colleagues who are here today, Greg Hunt who is also the Minister assisting me for the public service, to Ben Morton, to Zed Seselja, and to those who may be linking in from other places.*

*Can I also Martin, place on record my appreciation and that of the Government and all the Governments' if I can be so bold, to say that you've served- for your service, can I thank you for your advice personally, and can I thank you for your dedication to the welfare of the Australian people over an outstanding public service career.*

*Over almost four decades – we're having a dinner at the Lodge tonight for Martin and Heather and a number of friends and we can reflect on four decades of stories I'm sure, and that has included more than a decade at the helm of three different Departments, and great Departments of this public service. You've been committed to fearless advice, no one can accuse you, not of doing that, to policy reform and making this country a better place.*

*I wish you and Heather all the very best for the new challenges that lay ahead and we're a grateful nation thank you very much.*

*Please thank Martin Parkinson.*

*I want to also acknowledge all the other Secretaries who are here today, including the incoming Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Phil Gaetjens who tells me his tie is where it's always been- at home! Not around his neck. There are many things I'm familiar with with Phil, not just that. And congratulations to you Phil and I'm sure you'll pick that up in the weeks ahead, and I look forward to working with you.*

*This place, our Parliament House, is on Ngunnawal land. Can I acknowledge the Ngunnawal people, their elders past, present, and those importantly, who are emerging, who we want to encourage and who we want to celebrate.*

*To any servicemen and women who are here today, to any veterans particularly as yesterday we marked the commemoration of Vietnam vets. Can I say to you, simply on behalf of our nation: 'Thank you for your service'.*

*And today of all days I want to widen the circle to all who serve the Australian public in the APS; those of you in this room, or across Australia, wherever you happen to be in every state and territory as well as overseas, thank you for what you do for our country and all of your fellow citizens.*

*More than 240,000 Australians work for the Commonwealth Government in one form or another.*

*About 80,000 are in the ADF. Add to that another 16,000 or so in the civilian arm of the APS providing for our nation's defence.*

*There are thousands more men and women in Home Affairs and our other security agencies, working every day to keep Australians safe through intelligence gathering, securing our borders, counter-terrorism, taking up the fight to those who would seek to do us harm.*

*One of the greatest achievements of these agencies is 16 thwarted terrorist attacks and that's something that the heads of those agencies can be very proud to have been able to achieve.*

*Thousands more are devoted to growing our economy, because we all know everything else stems from that. And ensuring Australians get a fair go in their daily lives, delivering on our infrastructure program, making our industries more competitive, opening up new markets, enforcing our corporate laws.*



*The list goes on – some 19,000 people in the Tax Office ensuring everyone pays their fair share according to the laws of this country, we think people should pay less tax, but they should all pay the taxes that they should pay. And to share the support of the services- and to provide the support for the services we all need by providing that tax revenue. There's about 6,000 people administering \$85 billion worth in health funding a year; and more than 5,000 people running our legal and integrity systems at the Commonwealth level.*

*Or the roughly 11,000 Australians in agencies working on cutting edge science, from CSIRO to Geoscience Australia; from the tropical North to Antarctica.*

*I could go on, but this snapshot tells you we're a pretty big show it's complex, it's extraordinarily diverse in all of its functions.*

*To meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, it also needs, as it has been, needs to be professional, capable, flexible, technology-enabled, citizen-focused, as Martin was saying, and open to outsiders and diverse viewpoints, both within and without.*

*And while the upholding of the best traditions of integrity at the same time, accountability and service that have been hallmarks of an apolitical APS for the past 118 years.*

*Today I want to place six guideposts out there to show the way forward as I see it as Prime Minister and for my Government for the public service, for the evolution of our public service and priorities for the future.*

*My remarks today are framed by a humble recognition that modern government is hard. Change is ever present. Expectations of the public have never been greater. And just as it is in business, the customer – and in our case, the public – is always right.*

*To support the Government across multiple, fast-moving policy and implementation challenges, the APS needs to evolve. Nothing new about that. In some cases, conventional wisdom needs to be challenged.*

*And most importantly, in whatever role you have in the public service, we need to make sure you have a clear line of sight, from wherever you are, whether you're up in Bamaga, or over in Bunbury, whether you're here in Belconnen, wherever you sit, whatever you do, if there's something between you and the people you're trying to serve, in your view, then we've got to deal with that. You need a clear line of sight between what you are doing everyday, every decision you're making every day, every contribution you're making every day, straight through to the Australian public. It's not about impressing your boss or impressing your Minister, or- we're just people along the way.*

*That clear line of sight is what I would want every single person who works in the Commonwealth Public Service, whether it's me, whether it's Ben or Stuey, or whoever in Ministerial ranks, Secretaries, or the first year recruit into the public service. A clear line of sight. So I hope therefore my remarks today will give you a better idea, a greater understanding of how the APS can better support the government and through the government, our nation.*

*Now my first guidepost is one I spoke of when I announced Phil Gaetjens' appointment.*

*It goes to the heart of the relationship between the Executive branch and the public service that enables all of us to do a good job. We have to get our relationship right between Ministers and the public service.*

*Because the best teams are the ones where everyone knows what their job is and they do their job well rather than being in a constant running commentary about the job someone else should be doing. I've seen those teams. They lose. The teams where everyone knows what their jobs is, what their role is, and focus on that, those teams win. And we're going to be a winning team.*

*My approach as many of you would know and who've worked with me in other portfolios, and it's been my great privilege to have served as a Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, as a Minister for Social Services, as the Treasurer and of course now as Prime Minister. I have enjoyed wonderful relationships with the public servants that I have worked with at senior and junior levels. And my approach has been based on a simple, straight-forward formula for managing that relationship– respect and expect.*

*Respect the experience, professionalism and capability that the public service brings to the table, both in terms of policy advice and implementation skills. And then having set the policy direction, expect them to get on and deliver it.*

*It is also about respecting the fact that responsibility for setting policy, for making those calls and decisions lies with the elected representatives of the people, and expecting Ministers to provide that leadership and direction.*

*Now this imposes an important responsibility, I think, on Ministers. And I've made this very clear to my Ministers. They must be clear in what they are asking of the public service. They must not allow a policy leadership vacuum to be created, and expect the public service to fill it and do effectively the job of Ministers.*

*One of the worst criticisms I can tell you, in the locker room of politicians, that one politician can make of another, is that they've become a captive of their department as a Minister. Now that is not a reflection on the department, not at all, not at all, but indeed on the Minister. It speaks to a Minister not driving their policy agenda. Nature abhors a vacuum just as much here in Canberra as anywhere else. And it will get filled. And I expect my Ministers to be in the center driving policy agendas for their agencies and departments. And so I've selected and tasked my Ministers top set and drive the agenda of the Government. I believe the public have a similar expectation of my Ministers as well.*

*This is very important for how accountability is designed to work in our Westminster democracy.*

*Ministers are accountable to the Parliament and to the public through our democratic process for the policies of the Government. Now I know you all know this but it bears repeating in the context of this principal, a public servant providing advice in a well prepared brief will and must exercise all due diligence and professional care in its preparation, and be absolutely certain and passionate about what they put in that document. But ultimately it is the Minister who must decide, whether approve or not approve, to provide comment, feedback, as they appreciate, because ultimately it is the Minister who will be held accountable by the public. And that's how it should be.*

*Only those who have put their name on a ballot can really understand the significance of that accountability. As much as you might appreciate the Westminster system, until you put your name on a ballot, that changes everything.*

*So I know that sometimes you may feel frustrated, or go how on earth my brief was so perfect, as I'm sure they all are, at the end of the day our Ministers, I, my colleagues, have got to look constituents in the eye, face the public, look them in the eye, and be responsible for those decisions. And that gives you a very unique perspective.*

*When I played Rugby, my coach used to describe this difference as the bacon and eggs principle, the chicken is involved, but the pig is absolutely committed to the task. It'll catch on.*

*That is why under our system of Government it must be Ministers who set that policy direction.*

*And it is why, having set that direction, they will have high expectations, as they should, of the public service when it comes to implementation and delivery of the Government's agenda.*

*You are our professional partners in this undertaking.*

*The public service is the indispensable engine room for any successful government in delivering on its commitments to Australians. I mean this most sincerely.*

*I have always believed that, guided by clear direction from Ministers, the public service is at its best when it is getting on with the job of delivering the services Australians rely on and ensuring Governments can implement the policies they have been elected to deliver for the Australian people.*

*It's important not only to establish clear lines of accountability. It is also fundamental to ensure our democracy keeps faith with the Australian people.*

*That's what 'respect and expect' is all about.*

*My second guidepost is one I spoke to Secretaries about with the Deputy Prime Minister, in May, even before I had recommended my Ministry to the Governor-General.*

*You'll remember President Clinton and his famous lines about "it's about the economy, stupid" he would say.*

*Well for us, "It's about the implementation". That's an important guidepost.*

*We need a step-change on service delivery.*

*Ensuring services are delivered seamlessly and efficiently, when and where they are needed, this is a key priority, the key priority of my Government.*



*Just as good business strategy is always about how you execute it, the same is true in Government policy. It's only ever as good as its implementation. And you are the implementers.*

*I don't know how many beautiful strategy documents I've seen over my course of life, in public service and in other fields, people can celebrate these strategy documents, they can be incredibly impressive, but I tell you what, the only strategies that are any good are the ones that are implemented and work.*

*And the ultimate test of a strategy is not how pretty it looks, but how well it's done.*

*Good government is about receiving excellent policy advice. But that advice is only as good as the consideration in detail that it gives to implementation and execution.*

*And this is not an exercise in providing a detached or dispassionate summary of the risks that can be logged in the "told you so" file for future reference in memoirs.*

*It's about telling Governments how things can be done, not just the risks of doing them, or saying why they shouldn't be done. The public service is meant to be an enabler of Government policy not an obstacle.*

*The Australian people need to be at the centre of APS service delivery. That is the thinking behind Services Australia. This isn't some fancy re-branding exercise.*

*It's a message to the whole of the APS – top-to-bottom – about what matters to people.*

*It's about what I call 'doing the little things well' – everything from reducing call waiting times and turnaround on correspondence, right through to improving the experience people have as they walk into a Centrelink office or any other government service office around the country.*

*I want to send a message to everyone who is in the service, in whatever role you have – you can make a difference to the lives of the Australian people.*

*We all have a job to do and that is to serve them.*

*I've talked about the need for a culture of regulatory congestion busting in our bureaucracy.*

*That doesn't mean cutting corners or not meeting regulatory requirements.*

*But it does mean being relentless in finding ways to help Australians make things happen and reach their goals. Not sitting passively while families and businesses struggle to navigate unnecessary rules and unnecessary regulations.*

*We need interactions with government to be simpler, more human, and less bureaucratic.*

*Whether it be in delivering services like the NDIS, or rolling out our ambitious infrastructure program, or removing unnecessary barriers to business investment.*

*It's why I have tasked my Assistant Minister Ben Morton with revitalising our regulatory reform and deregulation agenda, with a new Deregulation Taskforce which is being led by the Treasurer, out of Treasury.*

*A key focus is on working with business to identify and remove unnecessary barriers to investment, with a focus on sectors and activities which have the most to gain.*

*At the departmental level, Secretaries will need to be proactive in identifying ways to bust congestion in the Commonwealth bureaucracy. And all Ministers will continue to remain responsible for ensuring that regulations in their portfolios are fit-for-purpose.*

*I also want congestion busted in the public service hierarchy which can block your contribution. You don't have to be in the SES to have a good idea. Did anyone know that's true? I saw this in Treasury when I used to do budgets.*

*I used to love going down to the Treasury building in those weeks before the Budget. People there eating pizza well into the night, working really hard, and taking great pride in their work. I remember one night I sat down and I spoke to one of the officers who was working on one of the statements in the Budget which had to do with good debt and bad debt. And I remember meeting one of- their parent, their father, I forget where it was around the country one day, and he reflected this conversation I'd had with his daughter that night. And he was terribly proud of the work that she was doing. And there she was, crunching away there in the bowels of Treasury, in the middle of a Budget process making a big difference to understanding how we treat debt in this country. And really changing the conversation, taking pride in their work.*

*It was the same when I would go out to the Social Services when Finn Pratt was the Secretary and I remember talking to that wonderful little team that was working on distribution modelling when we were going through some social services reforms a few years ago, and one of them from- I recall, was actually there on an internship I think at the time or they were recent recruit, and couldn't believe that in their first year in the service here they were sitting down with a Minister crunching through distribution modelling processes.*

*More recently I visited DFAT and I particularly want to commend there, Frances on the outstanding job she's doing as secretary of DFAT and I want to thank the- I went there to thank the officers who had worked in difficult situations regarding getting children out of some of the most unsafe places in the world, who had secured one of our citizen's safe release out of North Korea and my favourite, I could almost say my favourite part of the public service, I'm spending so much time with them recently, the Office of the Pacific, driving our Step Up initiative. And to say thank you to Ewen and all the team there.*

*I mean this stuff, I get it, I see it, I appreciate it.*

*And of course during my time at immigration and border protection, the remarkable and courageous efforts of everyone involved in Operation Sovereign Borders. Many of the most critical initiatives that came out of OSB and some of the most initiative were the product of the contribution of line officers in the public sector, working together in teams and focusing on solutions, not problems. Public service at its best.*

*And I want to harness that to enable your meaningful impact on the decision making process.*

*I am concerned, I recently learned that in a survey, just over a quarter of the APS does not really feel they can impact what's going on. That really does concern me. I want people in the APS to feel they can make a contribution. I don't want you to feel shut out. You need to feel that you can make a difference. Otherwise why are you here? I make the assumption that you're here to make a difference and I think that assumption is absolutely correct.*

*Now to be a bit harsh, I think that result is a failure of public service management to enable that real engagement. We've got to work harder on that. This is one of the things I expect to see our public service leaders change in the future.*

*I want to draw further down into the public service for advice to those doing things on the ground. I want more input from you, more visibly in what's coming through to me in my office and the offices of my Ministers. I want the gatekeepers who control access to Ministers to ease up a bit and let you in. Let me see what others are thinking.*

*So don't be surprised if you find yourself in my office or one of my Minister's office in the future, wherever you happen to sit. And if you get a call and someone who says they're the PM, it may not be a prank call.*

*But after this speech, I suspect there'll be many such prank calls in the next 24 hours.*

*My third guidepost is called "look at the scoreboard".*

*We must have a strong emphasis on delivering outcomes, with priorities, targets and metrics across all portfolios. That's not new.*

*Faced with scarce resources, setting priorities is essential. Setting targets and metrics at the same time helps us stay on track. And this is the point. Sure it provides some necessary accountability when performance measures are in place, for people management but the real purpose is to ensure we are getting done what we set out to do.*

*There are three basic questions I would ask you all to consider every day at work:*

- 1. What are you trying to do?*
- 2. How do you know you're on track to get there?*
- 3. What does it look like when you've got there?*

*In other words what does success look like, at the start, along the way and at the end?*

*This is the information that helps me and my Cabinet be informed to make the decisions and adjustments to policy that keeps us heading in the right direction, and providing you with the clarity you need to get on with your job.*

*A friend of Stuart Roberts' and mine, General Jim Molan used to have this great sign, stating that no strategy ever survives contact with the enemy. And you know, things have to be changed along the way. And the only way you know that is based on the data and information that's coming back. That doesn't mean that the programme's failing, it just means that you need to constantly adjust and stay focused on your goal.*

*I want public servants to know and share in the success of public policy. I want you to feel good about what you do, the contribution you make and the positive difference you can make to the country and its future. Because otherwise, again, what is the point?*

*If your success is measured solely in career advancement through the seemingly infinite grades of the public service, I don't think that's enough. It's not what I want as a citizen from my public service, let alone as the Prime Minister. And I think the overwhelming majority of public servants feel the same way.*

*Rather than complicating your life, I would suggest these three questions that I've outlined, open the door to a more satisfying APS career for you and a better experience for the Australian public.*

*My Government will continue to set clear priorities and strong targets for the APS.*

*I have established with Martin's great assistance and leadership, a dedicated Priorities and Delivery Unit in PM&C and all Cabinet Ministers are developing their own set of objectives and targets.*

*This is something we've been doing a lot of work on since the election. We've made good progress, but there's a lot more to be done.*

*Now the fourth guidepost is called, I'm sure you'll love this one "look beyond the bubble".*

*There are many highly organised and well-resourced interests in our democracy. They come to Canberra often. They are on the airwaves, they're on the news channels. They meet regularly with politicians, advisers and departments to advance the policy ideas and causes on behalf of those who they represent.*

*Some will be corporate interests. Some will be advocating for more welfare spending or bigger social programs. Many will be looking for a bigger slice of government resources.*

*Yet the vast majority of Australians will never come to Canberra to lobby government. They won't stay at the Hyatt. They won't have lunch at the Ottoman. They won't kick back at the Chairman's Lounge at Canberra airport after a day of meetings.*

*And what these Australians who don't do those things do every day is work hard. They pay their taxes. They put their kids through school. They look after their families. They give back to their communities and they are the centre of my focus as PM and my Government.*

*These are your stakeholders, not the myriad of vested and organised interests that parade through this place.*

*They rely, those Australians I'm speaking of on the services that you deliver, that make their lives just that bit easier and better. And they want value for money for those services, through the taxes that they're paying.*

*They expect governments to focus on what matters to them:*

- A strong economy that generates more and better jobs and better paid jobs.*
- Ensuring Australians are kept safe from threats abroad and at home, it's a convulsing world at the moment, and we all have a job to keep calm and to provide that reassurance to them*
- Making sure services are reliable and responsive to their needs.*

*I want the APS to have a laser-like focus on serving these quiet Australians. Those who don't meet here, and you never hear from largely, they're too busy doing life. Australians who just get on with it, but who often feel their voice gets drowned out by the shoutier ones in the public sphere and parading through this place.*

*There is strong evidence that the "trust deficit" that has afflicted many Western democracies over recent years stems in part from a perception that politics is very responsive to those at the top and those at the bottom, but not so much to those in the middle.*

*This will not be the case under my Government.*

*Middle Australia needs to know that the Government and including the public service, is on their side.*

*My fifth guidepost and forgive me to all the AFL people in the room, but I'm going to use a Rugby League example, feel free to apply your favourite AFL player of all time- I know the Minister for Health is going to do this, but given I'm a Rugby League fan and my Chief of Staff is, we're using a Rugby League one from this podium today- it is called the Ray Price principle, those of you who know of the Rugby League legend from Parramatta, Mike Pezzullo will well know about this, he's known as Mr Perpetual Motion.*

*Ray was everywhere. His work rate was unmatched. The conditions, his opponents, never fazed him. He could read the play and always stay ahead of the game.*

*The APS needs to be the same. It needs to evolve and adapt amidst constant change. Old ways of doing things need to be challenged and, if necessary, disrupted.*

*As you know, David Thodey is leading, and is completing now, finalising now, his major review of the APS and I expect his report to pick up this theme of how the service needs to change so it can respond to new and emerging challenges – economic, social, technological and geo-political.*

*We need the APS to be an exemplar of innovation and adaptability. More agile and more responsive to the public where they live.*

*There are many dimensions to this challenge, let me focus on three quickly.*

*Firstly, we need the public service to be more open to outsiders.*

*Information has never been more available and expertise in our society has never been more dispersed. Citizens from all walks of life have never had more outlets to express their views – their likes and their dislikes.*

*To succeed, government needs to tap these insights, and these skills and energy from more points on the compass than those who have only ever worked in the public service.*

*While some of our brightest minds will want a lifetime career in the federal bureaucracy, many of you here, many Australian's won't. And we need to find ways for smart, dedicated Australians to see a stint in the public service as part of their career journey.*

*And likewise for those who've chosen a life as career public servants to see that time outside of the APS in the non-government sector and in the business sector, that that is also an important part of their career journey. And their career choice. Their life choice. The APS system should reinforce and reward these choices. And I'm not confident it currently does.*

*This is about reinforcing two important values as the Health Minister and Assistant Minister- Minister assisting me for the public service reminded me of just over the weekend.*

*First the importance of outside and mid-career experienced recruits to informing the understanding of how sectors and the economy operate on the ground.*

*Second, the career development value for long term public servants of their own experience in the private sector. In the same way as experience in a ministerial office is valued, so should be a private sector secondment.*

*The APS needs to be world-class at collaborating with external partners on all the challenges we face as a country – everything from grasping the productivity opportunity of the digital economy, to ending the export of waste to using Big Data to dramatically improve service delivery.*

*The second area where disruption and cultural change are needed is in breaking down the bureaucratic silos and hierarchies that constrain our capacity to fix problems.*

*We've only had this problem in the public service for 118 years.*

*We need an APS that's more joined-up internally and flexible in responding to challenges and opportunities.*

*The model I'm most proud of in recent times, and there are many, is the way the APS responded to assist Australians in North Queensland hit by the devastating floods earlier this year.*

*It highlighted the way I like to work as well: pulling the right people together, removing obstacles to the delivery of programs, engaging with those most affected on the ground, and demonstrating that the Government can be there for them when they need it most.*

*This really made a difference. It saved lives, literally, and it saved livelihoods. And it saved a way of life, in Australia that has been there for hundreds of years.*

*This is the sort of agile and responsive public service, which Shane Stone most recently had the privilege to just lead that small team. That sort of attitude we need to further build across all arms of government as Australia navigates rapid change and a more uncertain world.*

*It will require departments to become more adept at reallocating resources to fit changing priorities. Not just ask for more. Because Mathias will say no. I know it can be done because I have driven it myself in three different portfolios prior to service as Prime Minister.*

*The third area of disruption is obviously greater use of digital technology which Minister Robert is very closely involved in.*

*The digital revolution – with the exponential rise in connectivity, data generation, processing power and personalised service delivery – continues to reshape our jobs, industries and lives on a daily basis.*

*With our fellow Australians among the most enthusiastic early adopters of technology in the world, harnessing the power of digital technology is not an option for the Australian Government. It's the future of it.*

*Government needs to connect instantaneously and seamlessly with Australians to answer questions, provide services, make payments and solve problems. I like how Martin referred to it before, when they engage with the public service they don't feel like they're going back in time.*

*So providing a roadmap for our work on data and digital transformation is important, and that's what the Digital Transformation Strategy did last year and our goal is to have all government services available digitally by 2025.*

*This is part of a broader transformation, of challenge that includes tailoring policies and service delivery to individuals and local communities and using data and analytics for better policy and service delivery.*

*Just as technology opens up new opportunities, it also creates new vulnerabilities. Whether it be working through the ethical and privacy dimensions of the digital revolution or protecting our systems and our national security from malicious cyber activity, the Australian Government cannot be anywhere but on the forefront, on the frontier of that activity.*

*Now you'll be pleased to know, I'm getting to the end.*

*My sixth and final guidepost is "honour the code".*

*It's something that I observed amongst the veteran's community, and I take, and I'd encourage you to take your lesson from them, and our serving men and women in the ADF. They are bound together by a code, an unbreakable code. That sees them act at the highest levels of integrity under the most extreme levels of pressure. It is that code that keeps them together and where that code fails or where that code breaks, then we know what the consequences of that can be.*

*It's about governance and integrity across the service.*

*I want to reaffirm my Government's and my personal commitment to an APS that is apolitical, merit based and committed to the highest standards of integrity.*

*These core elements of the Westminster tradition are as important as they have ever been, not least to securing the trust and legitimacy of democratic government that is needed to implement good policy and to deliver services successfully.*

*And on the critical relationship between Ministers, their staff and the bureaucracy, let me underscore what I have said directly to all of my Ministers. I expect my Ministers to be demanding. I also expect them and all of their staff to discharge their responsibilities with the highest standards of professionalism and within a values framework of mutual respect. And where that isn't occurring, there are ways and processes to deal with that.*

*It's important we value diversity of course in the public service. This is right in and of itself. It is in keeping with the more diverse, pluralistic society Australia has become over many decades. And it chimes with our national ethos of "live and let live".*

*I believe a commitment to diversity should encompass diversity of viewpoints within the APS. There is compelling evidence that this helps teams find answers to complex problems by bringing together people who approach questions from different points of view.*

*The American academic Jonathan Haidt has made this point powerfully in challenging worrying trends toward conformity in the university sector. And I think his observations are relevant to the future of our public service.*

*It's vital that the APS avoid the sort of stale conventional wisdoms and orthodoxies that can infuse all large organisations.*

*I expect there will be more debate on those issues as I have raised today throughout my address when the Independent Review of the APS, the Thodey Review, is received by the Government formally.*

*The review will be finalised shortly and I want to thank in particular, David Thodey who I've already had an opportunity to meet with, and the review panel for their time and commitment to this exercise. It's been a big undertaking. And it's been a fair dinkum effort.*

*Once the report has been received, I will be asking the Secretaries Board under Phil Gaetjen's leadership to evaluate the review's recommendations and to report to Cabinet on relevant issues and findings.*

*So as we gather here in this Great Hall, I want to remind you of a poignant feature of this house of democracy.*

*This is one of the few parliamentary buildings in the world where you don't have to walk up steps to enter it.*

*Our Parliament isn't a Parliament over the people or above them, but one that people, that Australians, can freely and easily approach.*

*I want this to be a metaphor for how Australians see their government. And our government.*

*Our work is not governing over people, but to humbly govern for people. With a clear line of sight always to those people.*

*Working with people.*

*Governing for all Australians.*

*Delivering for them and never letting anything get in your line of sight between you and the people you have chosen to serve, as much as I have.*

*It is a privilege to serve the Australian people and I am grateful for the enthusiasm and passion of our public service who share this good, and decent and honourable vocation.*

*Thank you very much for your attention today, I know I've unloaded a lot on you today, but I thought it was really important, at the outset of this term, for me to give you a very clear understanding of where I'm coming from, and where my team's coming from. And we very much look forward to working with you in the years ahead.*

*Thank you for your attention.*

