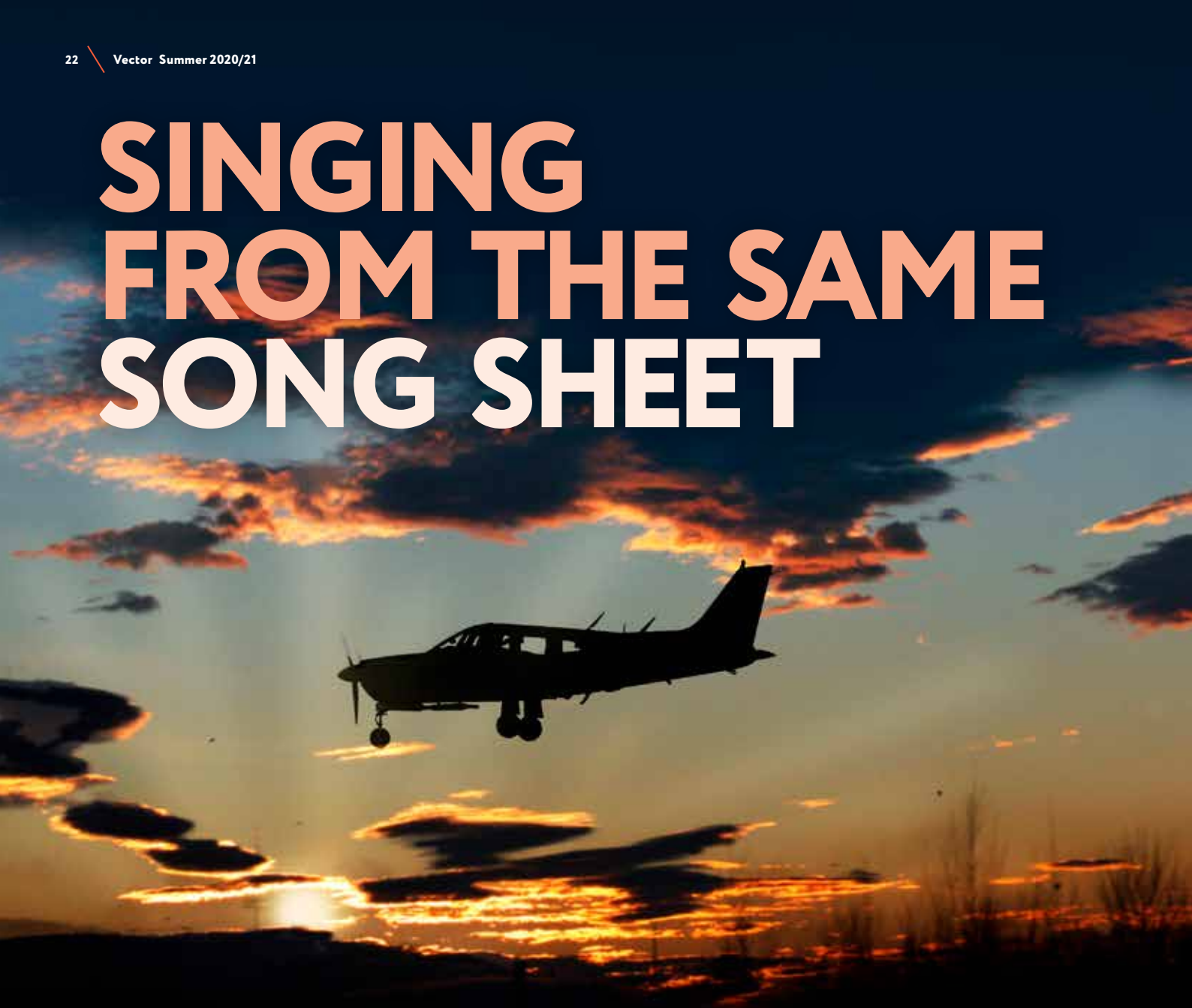


SINGING FROM THE SAME SONG SHEET



The CAA now has a specialist ‘interventions’ team which is combining analysis, SMS processes and marketing principles to influence safety behaviour in the aviation community. Importantly, it will drive coordinated messages from the CAA about safety.



Intervening to avoid occurrences in high-risk areas has always been a part of the CAA’s declared mission.

But often, day-to-day workload – certification, surveillance, monitoring, advice-giving, email and phone answering – ate away at the intentions of CAA staff to do

what they could to prevent specific occurrences in specific areas.

A new regulatory interventions team, however, is now dedicated to designing campaigns to encourage safer practice in areas shown to be at higher risk of occurrences.

Jack Stanton leads the new unit.

“We’ll take the findings of the CAA data analysts as to trends and themes. We’ll apply SMS principles to those trends and themes, identifying and prioritising risk, and developing mitigations. Then we’ll come up with a campaign to encourage participants into safer practice.”

For illustration, Jack likens the design of a CAA intervention to a retail marketing campaign.

“Let’s say the analysis by a clothing retailer of sales data reveals purchases of winter coats have slowed.

“On the basis of those analytics, the retailer devises a strategy to revitalise sales of winter coats. They launch a new winter range, shoot photos of the range modelled in exciting places, and create marketing materials for shop front windows.

“They might back this up with something on the radio, TV, social media, bus stops and mail-out catalogues.

“The campaign is synchronised – each feature has the same messaging, branding and colours.

“Campaigns trying to influence safety behaviour are very similar. When Waka Kotahi – the New Zealand Transport Agency – runs a campaign about seatbelt safety, you see ads on television, hear them on the radio, you see signs on buses and on billboards. They have a coordinated message and a coordinated ‘look’.

“And it’s designed to focus your attention on specific safety issues, rather than just ‘drive safely’.

“This is the sort of informed and coordinated response we’re aspiring to in aviation safety.”

Jack emphasises the regulatory interventions will be fact-based and intelligence-led.

“Let’s say Part 12 reporting tells us that pilots not accessing weather information has contributed to a series of accidents.

“Armed with that insight the interventions unit will collaborate with other CAA units and sector stakeholders to design a programme to find the most effective way of encouraging pilots to consult official weather information.”

“The work of a CAA staff member in supporting that intervention may be the same as the work they’ve always done. Advisors will still advise, inspectors will still inspect, and for the period of this particular intervention, they may also focus on the importance of pilots accessing weather information.”

What success will look like

Multiple safety campaigns could be running at any one time. Some may be of only a few weeks’ duration, and some may run for months.

Jack says if the unit’s work is successful, interventions “will be the opposite of a secret.

“What we’re emphasising to participants and what we want from them will be really clear.

“They should see much more coordination and consistency in the messaging from, and interactions with, CAA staff, who should all be singing from the same song sheet.

“Participants will say, ‘every time I talk to any CAA staff lately, they’re asking me about accessing Met information?’”

The interventions team will continually assess the results of their campaigns to gauge their impact. The unit is adopting SMS principles to continuously track progress and adjust the plan.

“We’ll actually start designing the intervention by saying, ‘how do we assess the effectiveness of this campaign?’ That will make sure we’re designing something measurable, from the start.”

Jack says the campaigns will feature frontline CAA staff, and where possible, aviation community members.

“The experience of pilots, operators and engineers is vital in the management of aviation risk.”

Jack has seen just how powerful the testimony of an industry peer can be.

“It’s especially so when it’s someone you see as an industry leader.”

If you’re interested in being involved, Jack’s contact details are at the bottom of this article.

The campaigns will succeed, Jack believes, only if operators continue to make accurate occurrence reports, including their SMS ‘follow-on’ investigations.

“We need that Part 12 reporting ‘feedstock’. If people don’t report, or the quality of reporting and investigation falls off, the CAA will lose its understanding about what’s happening in the aviation community. Our interventions would become less and less relevant.” ➔

// FIND OUT MORE

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