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Issue 1 October 2008



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From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of KiwiFlyer magazine! Whilst it is not my intention to offer editorial comment in every issue, it is appropriate to take this opportunity to introduce readers to what I hope is seen as an informative new publication - and especially to say thankyou to everyone who has assisted with or come on board for this first issue.

KiwiFlyer is a marketplace magazine. Content includes products, services, business news, training, career, employment and marketplace information that we hope everyone involved in New Zealand aviation will find informative and interesting.

KiwiFlyer is published six times per annum and has a very wide circulation base. Many readers will have received a complimentary copy in the post and will continue to do so provided they are listed in the CAA database as either an aircraft operator or an aviation business document holder. Bulk free copies of each issue will also be distributed into different areas of the marketplace on a rotating basis. Readers who would like to ensure they receive every issue are welcome to subscribe at the introductory price of just \$20 a year.

It is intended that KiwiFlyer will become a reference publication for the New Zealand aviation marketplace. Every issue will contain a variety of editorial content aimed to appeal to a broad cross section of our aviation community. Expect to read articles related to all facets of the New Zealand aviation marketplace whether fixed wing, helicopter, recreational, private or commercial flying, training or maintenance provision, manufacturing, and more. We'll also evaluate various pilot and aircraft accessories as well as include a summary of ZK register changes in each issue.

We welcome your feedback or suggestions for KiwiFlyer. If you are an aviation related business, it is of course our pleasure to invite your involvement with us in future issues. KiwiFlyer has a very wide and targeted circulation and is the most cost effective way to communicate your message to the New Zealand aviation industry and its participants. Visit our website at www.kiwiflyer.co.nz for more details or phone 0800 KFLYER to speak directly with myself.

Thanks for reading. Enjoy this magazine and enjoy your aviation.

Michael Norton
 Editor, KiwiFlyer Magazine

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In this issue

- Portable Traffic Collision Avoidance**
 With a price of \$2495+gst, Traffic Collision Avoidance moves to the territory of must have gadgetry. We test the new Zaon PCAS.
- Are you insuring at correct value?**
 Bill Beard from Avsure offers a clear explanation of why you should be.
- A Tight Package**
 Aeromotive recently disassembled a new PAC 750XL, packed the entire aircraft into a 40 foot container and shipped it to the US for reassembly at a significant cost saving.
- HeliSpray Carbon Fibre Spray Booms**
 A short profile of Helispecs at Taupo and their innovative HeliSpray systems for the AS350 and R44 using carbon fibre booms.
- Tecnam Eaglet Available Now**
 KiwiFlyer spent a very enjoyable day with Tecnam distributor Giovanni Nustrini and sampled this excellent new aircraft.
- Clarity Aloft Headset**
 There is an interesting and quite different new headset available on the NZ market. KiwiFlyer borrowed one and took it flying.
- A matter of a pinion**
 Waikato company Autoflight are specialists in building gear reduction drives for recreational aircraft. Their latest offering is a fitment for the V6 Titan T-51 Mustang.
- Evektor SportStar undergoing club trials**
 KiwiFlyer visited SportStar distributor Colin Marshall and Canterbury Aero Club, who have one of these aircraft currently on trial.
- After the CPL(H)**
 You've spent \$75k to get a 14x10cm piece of photocopied paper from the CAA. Then what? KiwiFlyer talks to two recent graduates about their careers thus far.
- Guest Comment - Kiwi Pilot Training**
 KiwiFlyer invited John Clements, veteran of 50 years in the industry, to comment on whether Kiwi pilot training is meeting reasonable expectations.
- Accidents and Incidents**
- ZK Register Review**
- Subscription and Classified Forms**
- Advertisers Index**



Front Cover: Giovanni Nustrini pilots the new Tecnam Eaglet over Matamata during September. Michael Norton photograph.



About KiwiFlyer

KiwiFlyer is the reference publication for the New Zealand aviation marketplace.

KiwiFlyer is published every two months and delivered FREE to every aircraft operator and aviation document holding business in New Zealand. Combined with subscription and other targeted bulk distribution, advertisers are assured of the widest possible market coverage.

KiwiFlyer offers businesses significant promotional opportunities from informative commentary on products and services.

KiwiFlyer is the most cost competitive way for any aviation business to tell everyone in the New Zealand aviation market about their products, services, or recent achievements.

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Portable Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems

Zaon offer a low cost solution that will interface to your GPS

AS GOOD AS it might be to have traffic alert and avoidance information in the cockpit, the cost of such systems to date has precluded most pilots from entertaining the thought. This situation has changed dramatically with the introduction of the Zaon Portable Collision Avoidance System or PCAS, costing just \$2495+gst from South Pacific Avionics at Ardmore. *KiwiFlyer* borrowed one and took it flying.

How it works

Zaon's PCAS is a portable unit that can be powered from a standard 'cigarette lighter' outlet at 10-48V. It may be velcroed to the top of an instrument panel (or sit there on rubber feet) and provides a mono display of nearby traffic on a 54x19mm screen. Alternately the unit can be plugged into a compatible GPS such as the Garmin 495. In this mode the Zaon screen is deactivated and traffic information is overlaid on the GPS screen.

The system is a passive one; that is it doesn't interrogate other aircraft. Traffic is detected from the signals returned to secondary surveillance radar by the transponders in other aircraft within a 6 nautical mile radius. Of course traffic can only therefore be reported if other aircraft are operating their transponders and are within SSR coverage.

Alert range can easily be configured for distance and altitude preferences. Headset audio buzzers and speech alerts can also be activated for when converging traffic is detected. These fall into two categories of "Traffic advisory - Monitor closure rate." and "Traffic alert - Obtain visual Contact."

When used in stand alone mode, the unit's primary display will indicate the three closest aircraft within the selected coverage range. Distance, direction (in 45 degree quadrants), relative altitude and climb or descend trend are all displayed.

Control buttons are easy to operate and internal menu navigation is straight forward and intuitive. The manual supplied with the unit is excellent, providing good commentary on how PCAS works and what its limitations are (there aren't any significant ones), as well as operating instructions which are comprehensive and clearly written.

Installing PCAS is of course, no

substitute for maintaining a proper lookout. However most pilots will soon realise just how inadequate their lookout procedures actually are. Prepare for one or two revelations once you turn the device on.

A second opinion

For a second opinion, we spoke to a pilot already using Zaon PCAS near a busy training field (not Ardmore). He described it as a Godsend, telling tales of confused student pilots giving incorrect or unintelligible position reports, then picking them up on PCAS and noticing where they really were. He also mentioned flying over his house one day with the Zaon detecting a threat 400' above and behind which he dismissed as a false alert, only to be asked by his wife later that evening if he had seen the aircraft following him when he flew over

the house that morning. He described the Zaon as wonderful to have and a great way to make use of millions of dollars of SSR equipment. We would have to agree.



Zaon PCAS can be connected to a compatible GPS, displaying range, direction and relative altitude for nearby traffic whose transponder is being interrogated by radar. You'll be surprised at the number of other aircraft sharing your sky.



Multiple threats appear as diamonds with relative altitudes displayed, in this case at 500' above and 1000' above.

PCAS in practice

We tried out the Zaon PCAS in both stand alone and GPS modes. Having traffic information appear on your GPS screen is certainly very nice and requires no thought at all to interpret, however the Zaon's own screen does a perfectly good job of indicating where to look for close aircraft. It wont take more than an hour of use to become sufficiently accustomed to the display indicators, such that a standard instrument scan will prompt you to look at a certain part of sky as well if necessary.

One soon learns to "trust the instrument". On more than one occasion a nearby aircraft would be indicated, followed by the pilot (and co pilot) reactions (or dismissals) of "where? I can't see it". This would be followed by a better look and a visual sighting. It becomes apparent that more aircraft share the sky than you might normally think.



Zaon PCAS operating in stand alone mode on approach to Ardmore. The display indicates nearest traffic on the taxiway 0.3nm ahead and 100' below as well as two aircraft (both recently climbing) in the circuit to our left at relative altitudes of 600' and 900' above.

Special offer for KiwiFlyer Readers

Mention *KiwiFlyer* when you purchase a Zaon PCAS from South Pacific Avionics and receive \$100 off the normal \$2495 retail price (+gst). Contact Ross Osborne on (09) 298 1373, email: ross@avionics.co.nz or visit www.avionics.co.nz

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Accident and Incident Reports
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Type: Robin R2160 TZF
Location: Tauranga
Operation: Training solo
Date: 8 July 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 1
Report: During taxi, the pilot misjudged the distance between wingtip and fuel bowser. The nav light housing struck the fuel pump causing minor damage.

Type: Robinson R44 IXL
Location: Pongaroa
Operation: Agricultural
Date: 10 August 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 1
Report: The helicopter lost control on takeoff and contacted power lines. Aircraft written off.

Type: Piper PA-38-112 FVY
Location: Palmerston North
Operation: Training Dual
Date: 25 June 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 2
Report: The Instructor was taxiing from grass to seal and misjudged the softness of ground after heavy rainfall. The nosewheel dug in and the prop struck seal.

Type: Auster Mk5 ARR
Location: Hororata
Operation: Private Other
Date: 20 May 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 2
Report: PIC reported unable to stop aircraft on landing roll. Attempted ground loop at end of landing roll resulting in right tail plane striking a fence post. Effective braking was not achieved.

Type: Bell 206B HWI
Location: Leaning Rock
Date: 1 August 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 3
Report: After landing in snow, flat light and wind were encountered, which caused the machine to roll onto its right side.

Type: Bantam B22J RLA
Location: Ruahine Corner
Operation: Private other
Date: 14 July 2008
Injuries: Minor
POB: 1
Report: The aircraft suffered engine failure on takeoff, turned 180 degrees and made a hard landing. Substantial damage to aircraft.

Type: Hughes 369D HOT
Location: Bells Creek
Operation: Private Other
Date: 5 July 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 3
Report: The helicopter was hit by a wind gust at 4000', suffered a rapid descent rate and hit the ground. The aircraft was destroyed.

Type: Robinson R44 Raven II HKD
Location: Mititai
Date: 10 August 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 1
Report: The helicopter hit 11000 volt power lines at Mititai south-east of Dargaville. Minimal damage to aircraft.

Type: Piper PA-34-200 ROC
Location: Paraparaumu
Operation: Training Dual
Date: 21 August 2008
Injuries: Nil
POB: 2
Report: The left main undercarriage slowly retracted as the aircraft slowed down after landing. It then scribed a 100m left arc and came to rest about 12 meters off the runway. The propeller, wing and flaps all suffered various degrees of damage.

Please note: Accidents and Incidents reported above are sourced from the CAA website and are provided for information only. Accuracy is not guaranteed. Refer CAA website for updates or full briefs.

Are you insuring at correct value?

Bill Beard from Avsure offers the following advice when considering what value to place on your aviation assets for insurance purposes.

AIRCRAFT OWNERS should be aware that there are disadvantages in both understating and overstating aircraft values. Generally, aviation policies are written on the basis of "agreed values" but you should check your policy on this point. In the case of an "agreed value" policy the amount of hull coverage you purchase is agreed and accepted by the underwriters at the time of taking out the insurance and that is the amount you will receive (less the deductible) in the case of a total loss.

Be alert that under an aircraft policy, the insurance company at their option may pay for, (possibly replace) or repair accident damage. If you are light on value, the insurers have the option to pay out the total sum insured, less the deductible, and take possession of the aircraft (wreckage) which they can then put up for tender and sell off. As opposed to this, if you over-insure and you have a major accident, the insurers may decide to enter into a long, expensive rebuild and you could lose the use of your aircraft (and the income!) for months. The best idea is to insure your aircraft for its true market value so that in the case of a total or constructive total loss, the sum insured will adequately enable you to replace the aircraft with a similar model in like condition.

The economic slowdown has seen the NZ dollar fall from US\$0.75 to below US\$0.70 in just a few weeks and it could be heading for the mid US\$0.60's. This is playing havoc with the acquisition cost of imported aircraft which in turn reflects on NZ aircraft values. Operators of high valued aircraft and helicopters may wish to consider insuring in US dollars. The downside is that the premium must be paid in US dollars and that US dollar premium financing is not available.

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A Tight Package

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ONE OF THE disadvantages of manufacturing aircraft in New Zealand is the often complicated issue of delivering them to their destination market. Under the traditional 'fly it there' approach, the exercise requires the purchase and installation of ferry kits, ferry insurance, a great amount of bureaucracy, flight planning, lots of fuel, suitable weather and of course an experienced ferry pilot. Bringing all of this together can be fraught with difficulty. Weather can easily cause delays, pilots can end up stranded and the list of undeterminable costs goes on.



How it starts: Brand new 750XL in Aeromotive hangar.

A better way than ferrying

That is unless there's a better way. Phil Esdaile of Utility Aircraft Corporation (the USA distributor for Pacific Aerospace Corporation) thought that there was and offered Aeromotive at Hamilton airport the challenge of disassembling a new 750XL and packing it into a 40 foot container for export and reassembly by UAC in America.

The result was an outstanding success with Aeromotive completing the containerisation task for less than the cost of ferry insurance alone. Of course, such an exercise takes time and there must be facilities to reassemble the aircraft at its destination. With respect to time, Aeromotive accomplished their side of the task in less than a week. Door to door shipping time took another three weeks and UAC took a week to put the aircraft back together ready to fly. Both the disassembly and reassembly will take less time on the next occasion, there now being several jigs and experiences to call on. UAC have three more aircraft arriving over the next 12 months and all will follow this path.



Clearances were barely inches in any given direction. Note the wings already loaded above the fuselage.

The containerisation experience

After some basic geometrical calculations by Phil, which suggested that the idea could be successful, Brett Puddle (Engineering Manager at Aeromotive) settled on the traditional pencil and graph paper approach to prove the concept and

consider methods of loading and securing the components into the container.

The aircraft proved easy to strip with few tools needing to be manufactured for accessing difficult components.

However that didn't

stop the occasional comedian suggesting that PAC must have started with several nuts suspended by lockwire from the ceiling and then built the aircraft around them. The fact is that Aeromotive offer much credit to PAC for the ease by which the aircraft can be disassembled.

Once apart, the components had to be loaded into the 40' high cube container. With the planning already done, this was simply a case of being very careful as there were only inches to spare in any given direction. Brett credits the success of this

exercise (nothing was damaged) to great teamwork. As well as the coordinated effort by Aeromotive staff, Phil travelled from the US for the project, and neighbours SuperAir came to the party with their JCB loader and some high precision

manoeuvring. The pictures can only offer a small insight into this exercise and can't begin to show the sense of achievement gained by the Aeromotive team for achieving what some onlookers thought would have been impossible.

For more information about this project or any Aeromotive services, contact Brett Puddle on (07) 843 3199 or email brett.puddle@aeromotive.co.nz.

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HeliSpray utilise carbon fibre spray booms

IN RECENT YEARS, Helispecs of Taupo have developed a range of accessory items for working helicopters. The most significant of these, and now very well proven, is the HeliSpray system which is available for both the R44 and AS350.

Helispray features

Helispecs were the originator of the carbon fibre spray boom concept. Helispray systems feature these carbon fibre booms which as well as being lightweight, are oscillation absorbing and self supporting, meaning that supporting stays are not required. An additional bonus is that the booms are unlikely to bend up into the rotors in the event of a ground strike, though if they did, their low mass means that they are unlikely to cause catastrophic damage.

The entire system is fabricated in carbon fibre and stainless steel, eliminating corrosion and providing for ease of maintenance. User friendliness also extends



Helispray is a popular and proven R44 fitment.

to a simple installation and removal system, and optional single boom isolation control.

The AS350 system provides a 1000 litre underbelly tank (carbon fibre is an option) with spray booms mounted well forward



Anderson Helicopters of Hokitika assisted in the development of the HeliSpray system and are delighted with the results achieved. Their AS350 is pictured undertaking forestry work at Ahaura.

of the mast for an improved spray pattern, all of which can be installed and removed by one person. This system features dump doors which can be opened and closed by the pilot for partial load jettison or firefighting. An accurate pressure operated contents gauge is included in the pilot's console.

Comments from an Operator

Anderson Helicopters of Hokitika were the launch customer for the AS350 spray system. They chose the product because of the technology and composites being employed and because they were able to

work directly with Roger at Helispecs and contribute towards its development.

Fletcher Anderson commented that the system is easy to install and remove, has an excellent spray pattern with the toe mounted spray booms, and most importantly looks good on the helicopter.

More from Helispecs

Helispecs offer 30 years experience in maintaining working helicopters. Their services include helicopter rebuild and refurbishment, Robinson 2200 hour overhauls, Annual reviews of airworthiness, one-off modification approvals and also import / export certificate of airworthiness requirements. Accessory products include Helispray systems, R44 baggage pods and Helipower battery installations.



Dump doors open for fire fighting or load jettison.

Helispecs are based near to Taupo. Contact Roger Maisey on 0274 982 812 or email: heli.specs@hotmail.com.

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Tecnam Eaglet available now

THE FIRST Tecnam Eaglets have arrived in New Zealand and are attracting strong interest. An evolution of the popular P92 Echo Super, the new aircraft from Tecnam offers a variety of subtle but significant design improvements. *KiwiFlyer* met with Giovanni Nustrini, Managing Director of Tecnam Australasia and spent an enjoyable morning above the Auckland and Waikato landscape.

Eaglet Pedigree

The Eaglet is the fourth evolution of the Tecnam P92 product line, following in the footsteps of the Classic, Echo S, and Echo Super models. Tecnam's design goal for the aircraft was to meet the needs of a robust trainer for all levels of flight. With the Eaglet, Tecnam have endeavoured to combine the best features of all their high wing aircraft into one platform and it is fair to say they have achieved this with some success. Our (and other) flight appraisals have struggled to find anything significant to criticise on the aircraft.

Features and Improvements

Powered by the ubiquitous Rotax 912ULS, the Eaglet will climb at 1200fpm and cruise on 75% power at 112kts. In the microlight aircraft class, it carries a MTOW of 1200lb and a useful load of 470lbs. A luggage area behind the seats will accommodate 44lbs. Flaps down, power off stall is at 37kts.

Construction is all metal and there are minor changes to the wing and tail surface areas for stability enhancement. Pre flight and fluids access to the engine bay has been much improved as has access for brake fluid level inspection. The aircraft is now fitted with toe brakes as standard. Instrumentation and cabin appointment is impressive, with the design taking a definite step in the direction of GA aircraft.

Visibility and comfort have both been improved, helped by a slight redesign of window space and particularly by new seats that sit lower in the aircraft. At 46 inches wide, the cabin offers plenty of room and even larger occupants shouldn't feel cramped or claustrophobic.

Behaviour throughout the flight envelope is stable and predictable, with controls being well balanced and light as our flight test demonstrated.



Giovanni Nustrini, Managing Director of Tecnam Australasia, formats his demonstrator Eaglet on the camera plane over the fields of Matamata. Three Eaglets are currently in stock at Tecnam's Ardmore Base.



KiwiFlyer thanks Chris Haynes for the use of his P92 Echo Super as the camera plane for these pictures.



Established Reputation and Support

As the recreational aircraft market has grown, so too has the variety of aircraft available to prospective owners. A significant point of differentiation offered by Tecnam is their scale of operation. Tecnam is the most established microlight dealer in Australasia, safely claiming the highest number of advanced microlight sales – now at 197 over little more than 10 years. The business has grown to employ seven full time staff and operates from a substantial complex at Ardmore Airfield. This combined with six separate dealerships spread around Australasia ensures customers of superb support, all backed by a factory in Italy which is currently doubling capacity to produce 700 aircraft per annum from 2009. With more new aircraft on the near horizon, most notably the twin engine Tecnam P2006T, the next 12 months promise to be very special for the company and its customers.

LSA version ready to go

The Eaglet will be available as an LSA category aircraft with 1320lb MTOW as soon as remaining legislative issues are concluded by the CAA.

Special Offer on first three sales

The launch price of the Tecnam Eaglet is \$158000 +gst (current for exchange rates at time of printing). Normally this price excludes avionics, however Tecnam New Zealand are offering a free VHF Radio and Intercom fitout for the first 3 aircraft sold.

For more information:

Call Giovanni Nustrini on (09) 298 9144 or 021 832626, email: gnustrini@tecnam.co.nz or visit www.tecnam.com



Instrument panel has plenty of space available, as well as the look, feel, and quality of GA aircraft.



Engine cowls hinge upwards, making for much easier access for coolant checks and pre-flights.



Exterior lighting includes Taxi light, Nav wing lights with strobes, Tail light and Vertical tail strobe.



Modified wingtips improve STOL performance. The basic aerofoil is a modified Gottinga 398 profile.



A brake fluid inspection window is located in clear view behind the seats which are very comfortable.

Flying the Eaglet: First Impressions

Matamata airfield is the home base of Peter Ryan, veteran of some 9000 hours of fixed wing, helicopter and parachute piloting. When KiwiFlyer dropped in with Giovanni and the Eaglet, Peter was fresh from delivering 30 hours of instruction in the Eaglet's predecessor, a P92 Echo Super. Thus he was ideally placed to compare the aircraft and offer informed comment on the Eaglet. Peter writes:



FIRST IMPRESSIONS were good indeed. A walk around reveals a variety of small improvements – the sort where the whole adds up to more than just the sum of the parts. Most notable were the improved access to the engine bay, changes to the tail fin which have aided stability, more comfortable seats with good adjustment, door seals which reduce cabin noise, toe brakes, and an instrument panel with a very solid feel to it that has good shading, circuit breakers instead of fuses and is in fact distinctly GA in nature.

Once aboard the aircraft, you immediately notice the improved visibility. The seats are lower and window placement is slightly different. That makes a huge difference and eliminates any requirement to duck ones head in order to see out the window or around the airframe. You also notice how comfortable the seats feel. Our flight wasn't a long one but all except the most awkward body shapes could spend all day in the aircraft and not feel any worse for wear afterwards. That's helped too by the spaciousness of the cabin. Once strapped in, there's no rubbing of shoulders or bumping into each other during our flight. You don't feel at all cramped into this aircraft.

Then it was time to go flying. Starting with a high performance takeoff, it took only moments before we were off the ground and settling into a comfortable 1100fpm climb. Once away from the circuit, we began an exploration of the Eaglet's flight characteristics, evaluating with both Recreational Pilots and Instructors in mind.

The immediate observation was how stable and well behaved the aircraft is. Trim it in almost any moderate flight manoeuvre, let go of the controls, and the Eaglet simply carries on doing what you just asked it to do. The controls are very balanced and have just the right amount of sensitivity.

Allowing airspeed to bleed off below 35 knots and holding the nose high, the Eaglet offered plenty of warning that it wasn't in its most comfortable state -

gently suggesting with mushy controls and mild buffeting that the pilot should do something to compensate. We didn't of course and the buffeting increased to a rocking motion, then progressed to a gentle oscillation. With more provocation the oscillation started to diverge so it was time to make the appropriate corrections. A moment later, normal flight had resumed. No dramas there at all. And neither were there any when we stalled the aircraft in a steep turn. Warning signs were again gentle but obvious and a straight forward recovery led us back to normal flight without a seconds thought.

High speed flight and low speed flight were next to try. The Eaglet will cruise very comfortably at 115kts. As you would expect stability increases with airspeed and comparisons to the feel of a Cessna 172 can be quite fairly made. At the other end of the scale, we pottered along the runway on approach for landing at a steady 40 knots. Again, there was no untoward behaviour. The aircraft felt very comfortable and was fully controllable with no tendency to break away. Thus we touched down outside the clubrooms feeling very satisfied with our time in Giovanni's new aeroplane. There are a great many things to like about it and virtually nothing to criticise, which actually makes a flight appraisal quite difficult to write about.

There is no doubt of the Eaglet's suitability to recreational pilot ownership and it also gives all the indications of being a fine club and instructing aircraft. I felt very at home in the Eaglet and would have no objections to spending all day instructing in it. A worthy successor to the P92 Echo Super, the Eaglet achieves many GA standards in feel, comfort and robustness. You simply don't get the impression that this is "just" a light sport aircraft. The Eaglet's stability will allow Cessna pilots to transition easily, there being only low inertia management to become adjusted to. Our quick evaluation failed to identify any odd behaviour at all, revealing what is in fact a very desirable aeroplane. If you're looking for an aircraft in this category, give Giovanni a call. You're very likely to be pleased you did.



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Clarity Aloft Headset offers paradigm shift

Aloft Technologies have recently appointed Giovanni Nustrini as NZ distributor for Clarity Aloft Headsets. KiwiFlyer borrowed one of these rather different units and tried it out in both fixed wing and rotary applications.

SEVERAL PEOPLE that saw our loan headset asked the same question. "Does it work?" They also tended to ask it in the same manner, being that since it doesn't look traditional, it probably won't work, but they were curious anyway. The answer is yes. Actually it works very well indeed.

This headset packs a lot of technology into a very small space. Essentially it is a couple of "earplugs" and a flexi boom microphone attached to a lightweight wire frame that fits over your ears and around the back of your head. It's almost like putting on a pair of sunglasses in reverse and once on, you honestly won't notice that you're wearing it.

It is in fact a great disservice to call the earpieces, "earplugs". These are actually replaceable viscoelastic foam tips that are claimed to provide the highest level of noise protection (35-45dB) available by any method including ANR. (The headset does not have ANR circuitry). Sound from

a miniature speaker travels to the ear via a pathway through these foam tips. The result is exceptionally clear audio and particularly good noise reduction, more than suitable for the light aircraft and helicopters we tried the headset in. Foam tips last for at least 30 days of regular use and cost under \$7 a pair to replace.

Fitting the earpieces is very simple thanks to the wire frame supporting the various headset components. The quality of the

earpieces (available in three sizes) are such that they are very comfortable to wear, to the point of not being able to tell whether they're in or out. One user we spoke to provided the anecdote of fiddling with the headset plugs and intercom after turning on the radio and hearing nothing, only to then realise that he hadn't yet fitted his earpieces.

An in-line volume control is provided, as is an audio music input though this does not have an auto mute function, so care needs to be taken when setting the music volume. The product is elegant in design,

very well made and comes in a robust carry bag. Cosmetic benefits also abound. You look cool, don't get headset hair, and can wear sunglasses comfortably.

One would need to have a particular aversity to wearing earplugs not to like this headset a lot. Measured in terms of comfort, ease of use, audio quality and noise reduction, the Clarity Aloft headset stacks up as value for money. The problem for some people will no doubt



A very different and successful headset design.

be the perception that value for money comes not from these attributes but from size and carbon fibre and fancy padding. As such, Clarity Aloft offers a paradigm shift well worth exploring. www.clarityaloft.com offers numerous customer testimonials as well as interesting information on the research, development and performance of these headsets. The NZ price is yet to be set but current exchange rates suggest that this will fall around \$800+gst. Contact Giovanni Nustrini on (09) 298 9144 or email: gustrini@tecnam.co.nz

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A matter of a pinion

Autoflight release new Gear Reduction Drive for V6 Suzuki powered Titan T-51 Mustangs

WAIKATO BASED Autoflight Limited was formed by Neil Hintz in 2003 to manufacture Dominator autogyros, under licence to Rotor Flight Dynamics of the USA. Many of Neil's customers were installing automotive engines in their recreational aircraft and this brought about the need to design and manufacture suitable reduction drives. Whilst a healthy number of autogyros have been produced, the offshoot gear reduction drive business has now surpassed autogyro manufacturing.

Options and new developments

Autoflight offers a variety of two gear reduction drives to suit different applications. These include output shaft offset up or down specifically for Subaru EA, EJ and H6 series engines. A universal unit can be readily adapted to any engine up to 160hp. Mazda RX8 Renasis and 13B engines can also be accommodated, as is the new Rotomax engine featured at Oshkosh this year with an Autoflight gearbox attached. Current development centres around two reduction drive projects both involving three gears within the casing. In the larger engine stakes consideration is being given to an Australian requirement for a two gear unit to couple to a V8 developing 800 hp.

Why use a reduction drive ?

Homebuilders historically have used direct drive or toothed belt reduction drives. Direct drive applications miss out significantly on thrust available due to inefficient prop speeds and expose engines to reduced life given the crankshaft was never designed to have a large, poorly supported flywheel mass (propeller) attached to it. Toothed belt drives are equally undesirable due to the side load being applied to the crankshaft and the potential for belt damage and deterioration.

The first three gear application arose from a customer request to develop a unit for a Suzuki V6 engine installation in a Titan T-51 Mustang. In this case the belt drive reduction unit was not performing



This Titan T-51 Mustang at Matamata is the first to be fitted with the new Autoflight gear reduction drive. Owner Mike Crene was delighted with the trouble free installation.

as expected. Neil explains: "A two gear reduction drive would have been very large with 218mm centres. Three gears reduced the centre distances to 84mm and allowed a very compact casing. The outcome is a unit that is as light as practicable but robust enough to continuously handle 300 hp. The completed drive actually weighs 3.5kg less than the belt drive unit." Further units have since been completed

for a Honda Legend V6 and a turbocharged Suzuki four cylinder engine.

Development included close monitoring of running temperatures, particularly since the alloy case expands faster than the gear train. Ground running temperature stabilises at 50°C and drops to 40°C when airborne. The unit was internally inspected following 15 hours of running and gear clearance was adjusted slightly to allow a little more backlash. Titan T-51 owner builder Mike Crene has now completed the 20 hour developmental test flying regime required by the CAA and is delighted with the unit and its trouble free installation.

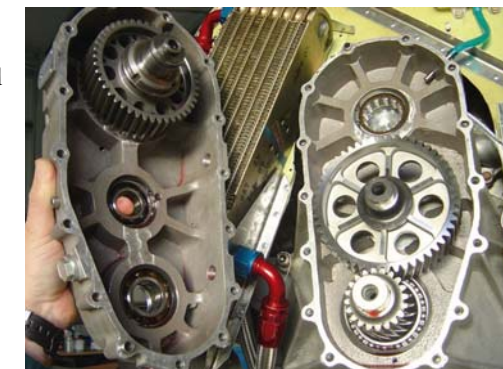


The aircraft is a work of art and so is the gear reduction drive which weighed 3.5kg less than the belt drive unit it replaced.

With flat 4s and 6s, V6s and now V8s, will a V12 feature in the line up? There is every chance. Recently Autoflight completed the machining of raw cylinder heads for a series of vintage Lincoln V12 engines for hot rodder and classic aircraft enthusiast Garth Hogan. The real McCoy is only a matter of time.

Availability

The Autoflight workshop might be small in size and staffing but packed into its four walls is an impressive array of CNC and manual machinery. Neil insists the whole operation depends on the special relationships established with local foundries, gear cutters and heat treatment suppliers. Now with customers in Australia, United States and Europe, Autoflight is becoming the reduction drive of choice for several recreational aircraft manufacturers around the world. Order books are consistently full and export sales are accounting for 90 per cent of production. If you have a project underway Neil recommends making contact as early as possible so that a unit can be scheduled for availability at the required time.



Using three gears to span the 218mm offset allowed a very compact casing to be created.

For more information contact Neil Hintz at Autoflight on 027 271 0602, email: nckm@wave.co.nz, or visit www.autoflight.co.nz



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Insurer's Acceptance of the Recreational Pilot Licence




KiwiFlyer is aware of recent confusion regarding medical standards for the Recreational Pilot Licence (RPL). Some pilots may thus be concerned about the validity of their insurance coverage if they are flying under a RPL.

Bill Beard of Avsure confirms that all the aviation insurers/underwriters whom he deals with accept without reserve the RPL as an equivalent of the PPL(A) and that all pilot warranties stating minimum PPL(A) can be substituted with "minimum PPL(A) and/or RPL".

"It seems that whilst our Insurance Underwriters accept the medical standards laid down in the legislation for the RPL, the Director of Civil Aviation is not of the same mind, notwithstanding that in the unlikely event something should go wrong with the medical programme, it is the underwriters that will be paying out 'real money' to rectify any aircraft losses arising therefrom."

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After the CPL (H)

Profiles of two recent graduates from Ardmore Helicopters

A TYPICAL helicopter CPL consumes something in excess of 150 hours flying time, 12 months of study and training, and \$75000. But then what? In an industry where experience matters most, employment can be very hard to come by and paid employment more so. Fortunate students may well get some support from the company they trained with, gaining valuable experience with which to leapfrog other new graduates in search of full time flying positions.

Two good examples of this process are Rob Anderson and Steve Logan, both graduates of Ardmore Helicopters Limited at Ardmore Airfield. Patience and determination are pre-requisites, but the rewards are there for those willing to pursue them.

Rob Anderson says that it took him a long time to get from 150 to 250 hours and that he spent many hours helping out "until the only way the boss could get rid of him was to send him flying." Rob's efforts paid off though, as his role in the organisation grew. Coached into an instructing position, he ultimately acquired B-cat status and also held a Senior Person's role overseeing the company's management systems. Whilst at Ardmore, he met pilots working in all sectors of helicopter operations in NZ and around the world. Although he enjoyed his instructing position, eventually he decided to head to Canada to see what sort of work he could find there. The work he obtained utilised helicopters to a far more intense degree than anything he had experienced at home with constant landings in unprepared sites, rivers, wetlands and bogs. He quickly gained a whole new set of independent flying skills, being away from a base in remote Arctic locations for weeks at a time.

Rob recommends that new pilots take the time to learn from people that have been down the path they want to follow, be prepared that the process is a long one, and be willing to commit 100% to it. "The rewards though, are plenty."

From the very beginning of his CPL training, Steve Logan saw the opportunity of gaining commercial experience with Ardmore Helicopters. Steve was determined to be an "active participant rather than a spectator" and assisted in a variety of commercial operations even though he was

training on a very part time basis. Once he had his CPL, Steve's efforts were rewarded with a part time commercial flying role at the company. His first jobs involved local scenic flights and short joyrides. Over time he moved into more advanced roles of banner towing, photography and frost protection. Steve notes that this was always under the watch of more senior pilots in the company, the culture of whom was to nurture the up and coming pilots rather than view them as competition.

An opportunity recently arose for Steve to train as an Ardmore Helicopters Instructor. Steve had a busy start to this part of his career, managing to acquire 100 hours instructing time in the first three months of having his rating. He is enjoying the role immensely, gaining a lot of satisfaction from watching students progress. Now aiming for a B-cat next year, Steve is delighted to be in a position where he can offer the same mentorship to CPL students as he received himself.

Ardmore Helicopters offer training that is personalised to suit your needs. For more information, phone them on (09) 298 1899 or visit www.chopper.co.nz.



Rob Anderson is now flying in Canada. The task when pictured was to establish a fuel cache at Nanacho Lake in the NorthWest Territories.



A part time commercial pilot, Steve Logan recently returned to study and gained his Instructor's rating.



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Kiwi Pilot Training: Are we meeting reasonable expectations?



KiwiFlyer recently asked John Clements what he thought about our standards of Kiwi Pilot training and flight tests. With 22 years as a Civil Instructor and Flight Examiner, backed by 27 years in the military, John is very well qualified to comment.

I HAVE been asked to write a short article on this topic. I feel flattered that anyone would seek my views. I retired last year!

Having spent nearly 50 years in the flying 'game' and having acquired about 15000 hours on 20 or so aircraft types, ranging from Sunderlands to Sioux, when asked: "Which is the best aircraft you've ever flown?", my answer was invariably: "That one we just landed in". For it represented the 'monument' to success!

If success means (among other things) no accidents, I did OK. I had a few close calls but no accidents, nor any incidents of note. I put that down to good training and testing - but perhaps more to good management and 'sixth sense' (situational awareness?). Those two things lead to good luck. One creates one's own good luck - and bad!

I was fortunate to fly with a lot of different nationalities and in quite a few parts of the world. I concluded in my dotage that Kiwi trained and tested pilots

are as good as most. In many cases better. Put that down to whatever you wish. I think that the 'Kiwi can' attitude, the vast range of tasks we undertake, our variable terrain and very variable weather, are the ingredients to turn out pilots likely to be the 'right stuff'. New Zealand has produced some outstanding aviators in both the military and civil sectors. As with sports, in flying we box well above our weight.

Nonetheless, there have been bad patches. Certainly, the helicopter fraternity has not always enjoyed an impeccable record. I recall about ten years ago, Frank Robinson accusing us of being a "bunch of cowboys". Sadly, I think a few 'cowboys' did bite the dust. Flying is unforgiving if you push the envelope too much.

"I encouraged students who passed (as well as those who did not) to provide feedback. Few do."

About that time, folk had a poor image of R22s. However, once governors were fitted, R22 accidents dropped right off. Some thought that 'awareness training' (isn't that what training is all about?) solved the problems. It may have had an effect but I think governors were the key.

Sometimes we don't look in the right places for the answers to problems. Often folk in high places are quick to damn. Like Frank. And others! I think that the standard of training and testing in New Zealand has improved

a lot over the years. And (surprisingly for some, perhaps!) I think aviation 'command and control' has taken a notch up.

In my time as a Flight Examiner, I heard few complaints about the quality of flight tests. There are (were?) problems with

lack of standardization and expectations between different FEs, but I think ASL/CAA/FE seminars have gone some way to resolving those issues. If candidates think they have been hard done by or unfairly treated, they should make it known. No FE that I know tried to catch out candidates.

I encouraged students who passed (as well as those who did not) to provide feedback. Few do.

If we were to do anything about flight tests, my suggestion would be (and has been!) to make CPL tests more 'task orientated' - as is done in Australia and Canada. That encourages candidates to think and apply 'command decisions' (commonsense?), rather than simply 'doing a circuit'. I think we teach and test a bit too much by 'numbers'. These are refinements I suggest might be trialed and built in with the passage of time.

So, in response to what I was asked to comment on: 'Kiwi Pilot Training: Are we meeting reasonable expectations?', I'd say: "Yes".

John Clements (73!)
2 years RAF, 25 years RNZAF,
22 years Civil Instructor/FE

"...my suggestion would be (and has been!) to make CPL tests more task orientated..."

KiwiFlyer Advertising Index

	page
Aeroflight Aviation	11
Aeromotive	11
Aircraft Logistics Support - Metals	4
Aircraft Logistics Support - Rotax	16
Ardmore Flying School	20
Ardmore Helicopters	20
Ardmore Sky Station	14
Autoflight	17
Aviation & Performance Parts	14
Aviation Cooperating Underwriters	15
Aviation Safety Supplies	19
Avionics Hawkes Bay	16
Avparts NZ	10
Avsure	6
Central Aero Engineering	16
Clarity Aloft Headsets	15
Classic Models	14
Composites International	11
Dennis Thompson International	14
DownUnder Pilot Shop	7
Falcomposite	2
Flight Helmets Australia	24
Heliflight Helicopter Services	11
Heliflite Pacific	21
Helispecs Helicopter Maintenance	8
Latitude 37 Helicopters	7
Marinair Technology	11
Martin Aviation Services	15
Micro Aviation	16
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology	20
NZ Pilot Expo	23
North Shore Aviation	7
Oceania Aviation	14
Paul Muller Aircraft	14
Randolph Engineering Eyewear	4
Rotor and Wing Maintenance	4
Seacom Marine Electronics	8
Southern Pacific Avionics	9
Special FX Supplies	16
Tecnam	2
Walker's Upholstery	8

NZ pilotexpo

New Zealand's expo show for pilots and aircraft owners returns to Ardmore in February 2009. Following the successful first event in 2007, this is shaping up to be the GA focus for the year where current or potential pilots and owners can see and touch products they have only seen on the net or in magazines. It is also a great opportunity to meet the voice on the other end of the phone. These are some of the companies who have already said they will exhibit:

Flightline Aviation, Cirrus Australasia, Tecnam, Falcomposite, REMOS, Leading Edge Aviation / Dynaero, South Pacific Avionics, Hamilton Avionics, Avsure, Heliflite NZ, Hawker Pacific NZ, Downunder Pilot Shop, Flight Structures, Central Aero Services, Avcomm, CAA, AIA, AOPA, Southern Aircraft Sales, Goughs, Eagle Flight Training, Aviation Safety NZ, Gyfly Gyroplanes.

Join this growing event today at www.pilotexpo.co.nz

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Editor: Michael Norton

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Advertising deadline for the December/January issue is 12th November. An advertising rate card is available from www.kiwiflyer.co.nz

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