

The Life Flight Trust

44 years ago a young plumber by the name of Peter Button watched in horror as the Lyttelton to Wellington ferry, the Wahine, sank at the entrance to Wellington harbour. Despite frantic rescue efforts, 52 people lost their lives only a few hundred metres off the coast of Seatoun. It seemed impossible that so many lives could be lost so close to shore, and Button turned to his friend and said, "there must be a better way". Today Peter's vision and efforts are evident in the form of the very successful Life Flight Trust which provides helicopter rescue and air ambulance services based out of Wellington Airport. The Trust saves hundreds of lives each year, and offers aero-medical services that would otherwise simply not exist in the region.



Photo by Scott Hammond
The Marlborough Express www.marlexpress.co.nz

The Life Flight Trust's Westpac Rescue Helicopter performs more than 300 missions each year, using a range of advanced rescue equipment that can be configured to match each circumstance encountered.

History of the Life Flight Trust

The Wahine disaster made a strong impression on Peter Button, planting the seed for an air rescue service in Wellington. In 1975 with the financial help of Wellington businessman Mark Dunajtschik, he bought a Hughes 300 helicopter and founded Capital Helicopters, then acquiring his helicopter pilot's licence. Wellington neurosurgeon Russell Worth, who had treated patients flown from offshore oilrigs in the UK, became close friends with Button. Together they worked on establishing their air rescue service, gaining an air operating licence in 1976. In 1977 Capital Helicopters upgraded to a Bell 206B Jet Ranger. Equipped with a winch, life raft, communications equipment and a 'scoop-net', this became the first civilian air ambulance helicopter in New Zealand.

In 1978 a truck driver with severe spinal injuries was flown from Wellington Hospital to the Burwood Spinal Unit in Christchurch. This was the first of many hospital transfers to come, and the importance of this service to the community became obvious. Public relations manager Bill Day, who was to

become Chairman of the Trust, secured sponsorship from the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1981, which ensured the service's survival. CBA Bank eventually became Westpac, who to this day remain the principal sponsors of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter, a shining example of one of the most successful sponsorship partnerships in New Zealand. In November 1982 the Life Flight Trust was established, and Button was awarded an OBE in recognition of his service to the community. The first fixed-wing aircraft was leased in 1983, and was used for long-range medical transfers of critical patients. The Cessna Golden Eagle 421 was heavily modified for air ambulance duties and included full life-support facilities.

Button's status as a true Wellington hero was cemented in 1986 when he and his son Clive rescued two policemen from the heavily damaged Police launch 'Lady Elizabeth II', which capsized in a severe storm. Wellingtonians watched from the shore as Peter and Clive braved atrocious weather in the Bell 206, ducking in between immense waves and plucking the two surviving policemen from the floundering



launch. Button was awarded the Queen's Medal for Gallantry and his son earned the Queen's Commendation for Gallantry.

Just a few days after the award ceremony, however, tragedy struck. While on an aerial photography shoot, Peter's helicopter was diverted by the Police to chase an escaped prisoner. The helicopter struck power lines as it followed the escapee up a riverbed, and Peter Button and two other helicopter occupants were killed. The deaths were a severe blow for the Button family and the greater Wellington community. During Peter's funeral, locals came out in huge numbers with thousands of mourners lining the streets. 16 helicopters performed a flypast in his honour.

The Life Flight Trust continued, and in 1988 introduced the first twin-engine rescue helicopter in the country, a Bolkow BO105. Unfortunately, its tenure with the Trust was cut short after a critical mechanical failure damaged the helicopter beyond repair. It was replaced by an AS350B Squirrel in 1989. In a classic display of Kiwi ingenuity,

the Life Flight Trust developed its own stretcher bridges, allowing patients to be transferred to the helicopter without being disconnected from their intensive care equipment. This signalled the start of full Intensive Care Evacuation (ICE) hospital transfers by the Trust.

In 1993 the Trust became the first air ambulance service in NZ to use the BK117, named after its sponsor - Westpac. In 1994 New Zealand Post sponsored a dedicated fixed-wing air ambulance for the Trust, a Cheyenne Mark II. A new stretcher bridge and loading system was developed for it, and this enabled the Trust to carry out fast, long-range, intensive care transfers throughout the country.

The Trust made the headlines once again in 1996, when they carried out what was the longest offshore rescue in New Zealand history at the time. The BK117 plucked an injured fisherman from a vessel 333km east of the Chatham Islands. In 1999 the Life Flight Trust continued its tradition of aero-medical innovation, and developed its

Captions at left: **1.** The Governor General presents Peter and Clive Button with their bravery award; **2.** Peter Button and his Bell 206; **3.** Peter and Clive Button brave 10m waves to rescue two Policemen from the Lady Elizabeth II in 1986; **4.** Fairchild Metroliner III KZNSS; **5.** BK117D2 ZK-HLF training over Wellington Harbour; **6.** Prime Minister John Key and Life Flight Trust Chair Bill Day launch the new Life Flight Air Ambulance.



**Tanker to Aircraft
Refuelling at Ardmore**

**Avgas and Jet A1
Call George Hoskins
Phone 021 369 600
or VHF 133.1 MHz**

**Ardmore Sky Station
Ph/Fax: (09) 297 7188
Email: skystation@xtra.co.nz**



From Pilot Training – to career building

• Commercial Licence • Diploma in Aviation • Student Funding available

Helicopter Flight Training - Full-time Career pathways courses - CPL - Instrument rating - Instructor rating
Choice of advanced qualifications - Turbine - Instructor - Multi-engine IFR-ratings - deliver options for employment.
Places are limited. Apply online and try our pilot evaluator test. Start building your helicopter career now!

☎ 09 299 1157
www.hft.school.nz



**Helicopter
Flight Training**





own neo-natal incubator for the transfer of premature babies. Their design was more compact, 40kg lighter, and offered greatly reduced power consumption over contemporary designs.

The 25th Anniversary of air rescue and air ambulance services in 2001 saw the introduction of a new aircraft, the Fairchild Metroliner III, operated by Airwork NZ. Originally an air ambulance for Pacific Air Ambulance, this specially adapted aircraft was capable of carrying two patients at intensive care level and up to eight medical staff or family members, with the range to fly anywhere in the country, including the Chatham Islands. At the same time, a dedicated road ambulance was introduced in a partnership with Wellington Free Ambulance to guarantee quick delivery of patients between local hospitals and Life Flight, and also reduce the strain on front line ambulances.

2003 was a demanding and event-filled year for the Life Flight Trust. In January the BK117 hit trees in the Tararua Ranges and, although there were no major injuries to the four occupants, the helicopter was damaged beyond repair. After looking at all the options, the BK117 was still found to be the best platform available and a new BK117 B2 was purchased for \$2.8 million. Also in 2003, the Governor General officially opened the Trust's new, dedicated facility at Wellington Airport, the Life Flight Air Rescue Centre. In October 2003, the Life Flight Trust carried out its 10,000th mission, a milestone Peter Button would have been immensely proud of.

The Life Flight Trust carried out an exceptionally long-range mission in 2004, with the rescue of a sailor with a life threatening injury, east of the Chatham Islands. The yacht was still two days sail away from the islands, and it was decided to carry out the risky rescue. The BK117 flew from Wellington to the Chathams, while a Vincent Aviation aircraft flew as a spotter to pinpoint the yacht, and an Air Chathams Convair 540 ferried additional fuel to the island for the operation. The Life Flight Metroliner flew to the Chatham Islands to rendezvous with the helicopter and pick up the ailing sailor, returning him to Wellington Hospital. With a severe infection setting in, he would not have survived another 24 hours without surgery. Footage of the dramatic rescue is on YouTube.

On 14 February 2005, the Governor General opened the Trust's Auckland-based air ambulance service, using another Airwork Metroliner III (ZK-NSS). The Life Flight Trust took over the air ambulance service for the greater Auckland area after the collapse of Child Flight, which previously operated the service. Within a



1. Jetstream J32 ZK-LFW outside the Life Flight Air Rescue Centre;
2. LFW's cockpit is a little different from other J32's;
3. LFW can carry its stretcher bridge and other equipment in the pod under its belly;
4. The air ambulances are configured for two stretcher patients, four medical staff and a plethora of modern medical equipment.

For your Aviation Insurance

Contact your broker for a quote or phone us today



Aviation Co-operating
UNDERWRITERS PACIFIC LIMITED

P: (04) 473-5593 F: (04) 472-6774
69-71 Boulcott Street, PO Box 10-027, Wellington

E: admin@aviationcoop.co.nz
www.aviationcoop.co.nz



BAe Jetstream J32 ZK-LFW and its impressive bandage and safety pin livery, designed by a team from Weta Workshop.

year the Auckland operation had flown over 1,000 patients. Ian Lauder, who has over 40 years of experience in the ambulance business, manages the Auckland service.

In April this year the contract for the operation of the Wellington-based fixed-wing air ambulance service passed from Airwork, with its Metroliner III ZK-LFT, to Vincent Aviation, and a British Aerospace Jetstream J32. The Jetstream is a much newer aircraft and carries some 30,000 hours less on its airframe than the aging Metroliner had accrued. The lease includes maintenance and aircrew for the aircraft, and is a perfect arrangement with Vincent Aviation's hanger located directly next door to the Life Flight facility. Prime Minister John Key unveiled the Jetstream ZK-LFW, at a ceremony at the Air Rescue centre on 14 June 2012.

The Life Flight Trust now operates a fleet of three aircraft, the Westpac Rescue Helicopter BK117 (ZK-HLF, which they own and operate themselves), a Fairchild-Swearingen Metroliner III (ZK-NSS, operated by Airwork), and the new Jetstream J32 (ZK-LFW, operated by Vincent Aviation). Combined, the two fixed-wings fly over 1000 patients per year, with the helicopter performing around 300 rescues per year. To date the Life Flight Trust has helped more than 20,000 patients, and has cemented itself as a vital part of the medical services used by the community.

Life Flight Air Ambulances BAe Jetstream J32 (ZK-LFW)

The Jetstream J32 offers many advantages over its Metroliner predecessor. These include a reduced operating cost and increased internal dimensions of the cabin. The ability to stand up inside the aircraft makes movement inside the cabin much easier. The Jetstream has an offset aisle, allowing enough room for two stretchered patients and their medical equipment to be accommodated down the right-hand side of the aircraft, and four

seats for medical crew or relatives down the left-hand side.

ZK-LFW first flew in 1992, and was operated by Air Brittany in France until coming to Australia as VH-OTR in 2006. It was then in storage for 5 years before ferry to New Zealand to become ZK-LFW (Life Flight Wellington) for Vincent Aviation. Currently Vincent Aviation operates one J31 and three J32-EPs, including the one contracted to the Life Flight Trust.

ZK-LFW includes extra backup cockpit displays that are not the norm for other J32s. In addition, Life Flight has heavily modified the aircraft interior for their purpose. A new wiring loom was added to supply the necessary power for the medical equipment fitted, and seats were modified to allow a doctor and nurse to sit facing each other alongside the patient. The toilet was removed to provide more room for manoeuvring stretchers. Extra communications equipment was installed to allow the medical teams to consult with specialists on the ground independently of the aircrew radio.

The aircraft wears an eye-catching 'bandages and safety pins' paint scheme designed by Wellington's Weta Workshop. Weta Workshop Creative Director Richard Taylor says, "I love the design, it is something a little different for the skies above New Zealand... it is also a strong iconic graphic for a great Kiwi team!" "The bandage design expresses, at a glance, what Life Flight is all about - providing life-saving emergency air services," says Life Flight's CEO David Irving.

Flying a fixed wing air ambulance service can be quite different from normal charter flying. One of the Vincent Aviation aircrew flying the Jetstream is Dion McMillan, who has 6,000 hours on light aircraft, 737s and the Jetstream. "We do not require any special ratings to fly an air ambulance, but do receive special training in patient handling," he explains. "From a pilot's point of view we attempt to carry out gentle take-offs and landings, and avoid turbulence by changing speed, track or height as required."



TECNAM

Still setting the standard after all these years



P92 TAIL DRAGGER

- Optional cargo pod • Optional glider tow hook
- Optional oversize main wheels and tyres
- STOL performance • New wing design enhances slow flight performance as well as extra efficiency in cruise • Rotax 912 and Lycoming IO-235 options



P2008

- Carbon fibre fuselage / metal wing
- Superb training platform • Centre throttle console
- Larger baggage area • 120 litre fuel capacity
- Super wide, comfortable cabin
- Fantastic long distance touring aircraft

Contact us today:
09 298 9144
021 832 626
info@tecnam.co.nz
www.tecnam.co.nz

TECNAM



Fairchild SA227-AC Metroliner III (ZK-NSS)

The first Metroliner design flew in 1972, and has seen extensive military and civilian use around the world, with over 300 still in use today. The aircraft gained a reputation as an unforgiving yet highly capable aircraft with a high cruise speed, good range and a usable payload. Like the Jetstream, the aircraft is capable of keeping internal pressurisation at sea level up to 15,000 ft, which is very important for air ambulance duties.

Life Flight's Metroliner, ZK-NSS, has had a colorful life here in New Zealand, and once flew with Chatham Airlink, a joint venture between Airwork NZ Ltd and Chatham Islands Seafoods Ltd. One of four Metroliners registered to Airwork, it has been in use as the Auckland-based air ambulance since 2005. The aircraft provides space for two stretchered patients and their associated medical equipment, as well as up to nine medical staff or support people. The Metroliner shares the same Garrett engines as the Jetstream, but the fuselage is longer, with a smaller cross-section.

Air Ambulance Operations

Almost every day a patient requires medical equipment or specialist care that is only available outside their local area. Each year New Zealand's air ambulance services carry thousands of patients on transfers between different hospitals, with illnesses ranging from heart or neurological conditions to accident injuries such as spinal damage or severe burns. Specially trained flight doctors and nurses accompany the patients from hospital to hospital. Air ambulances also fly entire medical teams between hospitals, as well as transport blood or freshly harvested organs from a donor to the recipient.

One of Life Flight's specialties is neo-natal transfers, with the Trust flying about 200 premature babies per year. Capital and Coast DHB, in partnership with Life Flight, introduced two new incubators in August 2010 after four years of development. They are the first incubators in NZ to be certified by CAA, and the first incubators capable of carrying twins. Many twins are born premature so they make up a high percentage of the premature babies carried by the Trust. Previously this would have taken two incubators, two doctors and two nurses. On neo-natal flights a doctor and a specially trained flight nurse are carried, along with the babies' parents or relatives. This service is exceptionally important, since it allows for babies to be transferred to and from Wellington Hospital's Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Caring for a premature baby can be gruelling work for parents, and often the baby will have been born elsewhere and moved to Wellington, away from the family's support network. The Trust's incubators allow the babies to be transferred back into the community of origin a lot earlier, which is greatly appreciated by the parents and relatives.

Patients are moved to and from their hospital beds on stretcher bridges that were designed by Life Flight and custom made in New Zealand especially for this purpose. Compatible with both aircraft and road ambulances, the patient's stretcher is attached to the bridge, which carries the oxygen and essential medical equipment that must be kept with the patient at all times. Each bridge has its own power and oxygen supply, a ventilator, cardiac monitor and intravenous pumps, and can be stored in the cargo pod underneath the aircraft. As CEO David Irving explains, "Life Flight aircraft have much the same medical equipment that you would find in the Intensive Care Unit of a regional hospital. It is all interchangeable between the fixed wing aircraft and the helicopter, enabling the seamless transport of patients from bedside-to-bedside."

Emergency and Rescue Operations

The chain of events that occur once an emergency call is received is complicated, and involves contributions of multiple agencies and specialists. A 111 call will be answered in one of three communications centres based in Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch. In some instances (for example, accidents in very remote or inaccessible locations) a helicopter may be dispatched directly from the initial call, as the time that can be saved by flying can be the difference between life and death. In other cases, a road ambulance may be dispatched and then on arrival determine that a patient needs either faster transport, or needs to be taken to a different hospital.

In some cases, people who go into remote locations carry a 406 Personal Locator Beacon from which a press of a button sends an signal, ultimately to the Rescue Coordination Centre. After a brief check to determine that the activation is not accidental, a helicopter would usually be dispatched as it is equipped to track the signal directly to the person in difficulties.

As soon as Life Flight receives the call, a number of processes commence simultaneously. These include mission planning, team assembly, pre-flight checks, equipment selection (such as medical equipment, night vision goggles, winch gear), and air traffic control priority co-ordination. An attempt is made to contact anybody

already on the ground at the location, and the best hospital to take the patient to is determined, and that hospital is notified. Meanwhile co-ordination is begun with any other agencies involved.

If the helicopter is dispatched to an emergency, the crew comprises the pilot, a crewman (who is also the winch-operator and a qualified basic paramedic) and an Advanced Intensive Care Paramedic from Wellington Free Ambulance. On arrival at the scene the paramedic takes charge of the patient's treatment, assisted by the crewman. They stabilise the patient, carefully load them onto the medical stretcher and then into the helicopter. Treatment continues on the journey to hospital. If flying into Wellington, they land on the helipad on the hospital roof and from there patients can be in the Emergency Department in less than 90 seconds. On reaching the required

facility, the paramedic hands over treatment to the specialist doctors and nurses.

The Life Flight operation is geared around providing an accurate response in as little time as possible. During the day they have an entire crew on base ready to go. The time from the receipt of a call to the aircraft being airborne is usually no more than seven minutes in the helicopter and one hour in the fixed wing. At night, the crew must either sleep on base or live within ten minutes' travel of the base, and more preparation time is taken to ensure safe night flying.



BK117-D2 ZK-HLF performs a display for the public at the Omaka Classic Fighters airshow in 2011.

Chris Gee

an authorized
Rolls-Royce
maintenance center



Safety Skill Service
Maintenance Repair Overhaul

Asia Pacific Aerospace specialises in the maintenance, repair and overhaul of small to medium gas turbine engines.

- APA - Rolls-Royce Authorised Maintenance Centre.
- APA - Approved Maintenance Organisation (AMO) supporting the Australian Defence Force.

FACILITIES

Asia Pacific Aerospace has two computer controlled correlated engine test cells which support a range of engines including:

- Rolls-Royce Model 250 Series Engine
- Honeywell LTS 101 Series Engine
- General Electric T700 Series Engine






CONTACT OWEN WALKER
PHONE 09 295 1407 MOBILE 021 067 870
EMAIL: OWEN.WALKER@APAERO.CO.NZ

www.apaero.com.au

The most modern, technologically advanced gas turbine engine facilities in Australia.

Pacific Aero Coatings

If your aircraft needs some care, we can help breathe new life into it.

Classic Aircraft Specialists

All Fabric services and restoration work undertaken
Material suppliers for all fabric requirements

**Paint Stripping • Corrosion Removal
Paint Refinishing • Interior Refurbishment**

- Fabric, Metal and Composite
- Fixed Wing and Helicopters
- Tiger Moths to Corporate Jets

All to a better than new standard that you will be proud of for years to come.

We use and supply
Superflite FAA approved
Aircraft Paint Systems
for fabric, metal
and composite aircraft.



Award Winning Fabric
Covering and Finish System

Hangar AS1, Tauranga Airport, Ph: 07 574 2922
info@PacificAeroCoatings.com
www.pacificaero.coatings.com

HELISPECS

helicopter maintenance limited

celebrating 30 years of maintaining working helicopters

HELISPRAY by **HELISPECS**
the originator of the carbon fibre boom concept

for Robinson R44

- Lightweight, 72kg with 4hp Honda
- Low mass oscillation absorbing carbon fibre booms
- All stainless / carbon fibre construction means zero corrosion
- Fast and simple installation and removal
- Single boom isolation option



for AS350 B2, B3, and Super C

- 1000 litre capacity with room for foaming
- Belly tank incorporating simple one person installation and removal
- Forward mounted carbon fibre booms
- Optional light weight carbon fibre tank
- Single boom isolation option
- Accurate, pressure operated contents gauge in pilot's console
- Dump doors open and close from pilot's controls for fire fighting and partial load dumps
- Designed by Operators for Operators
- Competitively priced
- Buy NZ made



R44 BAGGAGE PODS by HELISPECS

- 220 litres capacity per pod
- Light weight - each pod only weighs 14kg
- 250lb structural load per pod
- Vented for animal carriage
- Removable drain bung for cleaning
- Simple 30 second installation or removal
- Elegant design and excellent functionality



HELIPOWER by HELISPECS

Battery Installation for Bell 206, AS350, MD369C,D,E,F,530F,600N

- Maintenance free sealed lead acid batteries
- Light weight - 15lb saving over conventional lead acid battery
- 16 amp hours (typical NiCad is only 13 amp hours)
- Improved starting
- Initial installation \$1800+gst
- Replacement batteries \$700+gst

NEW: R44 GROUND HANDLING WHEELS

- Eliminates twisting loads
- Increased skid clearance
- Telescoping handle



Phone Roger at **HELISPECS**
on 027 498 2812 to discuss
all your helicopter requirements
or email: heli.specs@hotmail.com



Life Flight's Westpac Rescue Helicopter Kawasaki BK117-D2 (ZK-HLF)

Now incorporated into the Eurocopter stable, the MBB/Kawasaki BK117 is widely used the world over for rescue work. A combined design and production effort between Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB) of Germany, and Kawasaki of Japan, the first BK117 flew in 1979.

HLF is maintained and piloted under a contract with Helilink New Zealand. Harry Stevenson has been flying helicopters in New Zealand for over 20 years, and flying the BK117 since 2005. He finds this helicopter perfect for the work it is asked to do in this application. "Due to its compact size, with a fairly small rotor diameter and a nicely elevated tail rotor, we can land in quite confined areas," he says. "At the same time the cabin design affords a good working space for the paramedics or medical teams. The clamshell doors at the aft of the cabin also allow good access for loading and unloading patients. The aircraft is also very robust - it can handle some pretty tough weather conditions and is very versatile for all the different types of operations that we perform."

HLF has a night vision capable cockpit, can be fitted with a 30 million candlepower Nightsun searchlight, and can carry Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR) thermal imaging equipment that is so sensitive the crew can tell whether a house is insulated or not as they fly above them.

Different attachments are fitted to HLF's winch depending on the rescue being undertaken. For water rescues, the 'cinch collar' is put over the person's head, and under their arms. As they are lifted a clip releases, tightening the collar and ensuring they cannot fall out of the harness even if they become unconscious. The 'nappy' harness is designed for



Training with other agencies is an important part of maintaining safe rescue operations and preparedness for whatever mission the crew might be tasked to next.

rescuing people who are not in the water. The person being rescued puts their feet through the holes in the harness with the remainder coming around their front or behind. Paramedics and rescue crew also wear mountain-climbing harnesses that attach to the winch hook near the chest, leaving their hands and feet free to assist those who are being rescued.

Flying a Rescue helicopter places a lot of new and challenging demands on a pilot. "Personally the biggest learning curve was coming to grips with flying at night, and of course learning to fly on the night vision goggles was another skill as well," Harry says. "Typically as a normal commercial pilot there is not much call to be flying at night, apart from frost control ops. I know when I began in 2005 I had fairly minimal night experience, most of which was frost control which is an entirely different ball

game than flying cross-country at night to unknown remote landing sites, or conducting search operations at night in the hills or over water." Night cross country ratings and night vision goggle ratings are an absolute necessity for a rescue pilot. "In my opinion it is certainly the night operations that are the most difficult and challenging part of the job" Harry says. "There are also a lot of avionics and role equipment that you must know thoroughly, ranging from beacon tracking gear, search and rescue GPS, operation of search lights and the night sun, the list goes on..."

The other type of operation that is associated with rescue operations is winching and a lot of training and effort put into performing safe and competent winching operations which could be from boats and yachts, from the water, or through heavy bush during day or night,



The BK117's high tail boom allows easy access to its rear clamshell doors.



Inside the BK117 looking out through the rear and sliding side doors.



Life Flight team in action, attending to a patient at a road accident.

all in a wide range of weather conditions. Harry also points out that “another big challenge that is more commonly faced by rescue pilots is the discipline of making safe decisions when faced with sometimes strong external pressures. People’s lives are on the line.”

Communications are an important part of any rescue. “Good communications within our team on board are absolutely vital to carrying out the operations that we undertake”, says Harry. “Between pilots, Life Flight crew, and the Wellington Free Paramedics we are a pretty tight knit team, and we put a lot of time and effort into crew resource management (CRM) training. We all have input, but at the end of the day it’s the pilot that is responsible for the safe conduct of the operation. Communications can be an enormous extra workload on some jobs, especially search and rescue. When it gets busy we divide up the tasks between pilot and crew, whereby the pilot will communicate on the aviation frequencies and the Life Flight crew will talk to Police, fire, coast guard, ambulance, and maritime radio.”

The Westpac Rescue Helicopter can be called on to carry out a wide variety of missions at a moments notice. The role of an air rescue crewmember is highly rewarding and widely sought after, and like other rescue services throughout the country, the Life Flight Trust team are highly trained professionals who live their job.

Costs, sponsorship and fundraising

CEO David Irving explains, “It costs \$10 million per annum to run our emergency air services. Fees for certain services to the District Health Boards and other government agencies contribute approximately \$6.5 million per year. That leaves \$3.5 million for the community to raise each year to keep us flying. We absolutely rely on support from the community and are very grateful to everyone who contributes to save lives.”

The Life Flight Trust employs 24 people across its Wellington and Auckland operations including those who take care of the administration and fundraising. The small team of marketing, publicity and fundraisers staff need to raise over \$2500 for every mission flown. Along with door to door and community fundraising, many people and families whose lives have been touched by Trust will donate or bequeath funds.

The Trust relies heavily on corporate relations and sponsorship, with business’s gaining a lot of respect in their community by being involved with Rescue Service support. An obvious example is Westpac with the heavily branded helicopters in the news constantly as they save lives all over New Zealand. Other sponsors behind the Life Flight Trust include NZCT, TV3, the Dominion Post, Radio Network, Auckland International Airport, Wellington International Airport, Wellington City Council, Fuji Xerox, and TeamTalk.

As well, a much appreciated network of volunteers are required for fundraising, and many in the community thoroughly enjoy helping this organisation to save lives by donating their time or services. Who wouldn’t feel good every time they see a Rescue Helicopter or Air Ambulance in the news saving yet another life, knowing it was able to carry out its mission due to their contribution?

KiwiFlyer thanks the Life Flight Team for helping to organise our air-to-air photo shoot with ZK-LFW. Special thanks to Ian Pirie who flew the Jetstream with Andrew Mill as co-pilot. The camera-ship was a Cessna 182 of the Wellington Aero Club flown by Mathew Miller, both doing a great job especially considering the minimum speed of the Jetstream and the maximum speed of the 182. Thanks also to Steve Lowe from the 3rd Level New Zealand Blog for the wealth of information available on his excellent website: 3rdlevelnz.blogspot.co.nz

For more information about Life Flight, visit: www.lifeflight.org.nz



SPRATT

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Are your family and assets protected?

We are PILOT LIFE INSURANCE SPECIALISTS and can guide you through the process of PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY AND BUSINESS as well as INSURING YOUR DEBTS

Contact Craig Spratt
 Spratt Financial Services Limited
 Phone: 021 935 788 or 09 306 7250
 Email: craig@spratt.co.nz
www.spratt.co.nz

Independent brokers protecting pilots since 1992

Engineering for Aviation

Airport Drive, Palmerston North Ph 64-6 357 1149, Fax 64-6 357 0886



- ➔ **Airframe Maintenance & Overhaul**
- ➔ **Engineering Design**
- ➔ **Instrument Overhaul**
- ➔ **Electrical Overhaul**
- ➔ **Engine Maintenance & Overhaul**
- ➔ **Welding, NDT, Cable and Hose Manufacture**
- ➔ **Corrosion Treatment and Aircraft Painting**
- ➔ **Calibration – Tools & Test Equipments**

CAA Part 145, 146, 148, 19F, CASA CAR 30, NZS/AS ISO 9001:2000

FIELDAIR
Engineering for Aviation

fieldair.co.nz

contributed by Bill Beard

Claim Time Peace of Mind

Unless you are violating the terms of your policy, there should be no need for paranoia if the time comes for an insurance claim. Bill Beard from Avsure explains as follows:

I HAVE occasionally been party to a conversation wherein an aircraft owner will vent his opinion fairly strongly that Aviation Insurers would do whatever they could to avoid paying claims. I deal with insurance companies every day of the week and you may be interested to know that the underwriting staff of the majority of companies are very knowledgeable in aviation matters, either being long standing aviation enthusiasts or pilots, and in some cases even aircraft owners themselves.

Having been involved in the aviation insurance industry for 25+ years, I’ve only come across a few insurance claims that were justifiably denied. However, over this time I cannot recall seeing even one claim being declined for what I would consider questionable reasons.

I can assure you that aviation insurers would only consider declining a claim if there is a clear violation of the policy terms and conditions and that the violation is directly related to the cause of the accident that resulted in the claim.

Claim settlements are the insurance industry’s ‘shop window’. Companies will not risk legal action as a result of declining a claim on non-related grounds. On the other hand, I would expect an insurance company to deny a claim if the pilot was either not named as an approved pilot or did not meet the pilot qualifications or minimum experience levels under an open

pilot warranty. Likewise you could expect problems if at the time of an accident, the aircraft was being used for something other than the approved uses under the policy.

The best way to avoid problems in this area is to make sure your policy is correctly issued. I suggest you check it right now to ensure the uses adequately meet your requirements, bearing in mind that standard uses do not include (amongst other more hazardous activities) instruction, private hire/rental, aerobatics, patrols, experimental or competition flying or air races unless specifically mentioned in the schedule.

Ensure all pilots that fly your aircraft are named or meet any restrictions imposed under the policy. Ensure the correct pilot information, with regard to experience and hours on type are accurately recorded with the underwriting company. Bear in mind that known CAA violations relating to any pilot should be notified and updated every renewal. It is important to keep in mind that it is a policy condition that you must comply with all CAA rules with regard to the operation of your aircraft.

Avsure only arranges policies with specialist aviation insurance companies with an “A” or higher rating which indicate an excellent claims paying ability. We are very particular with regard to security we use in arranging aircraft insurances to ensure prompt and reliable settlements in the event of claims, but the owner(s) / policy holder must comply with the policy conditions.

To discuss this topic or any other questions relating to aviation insurance or to seek quotations, contact Bill Beard at Avsure on 0800 322 206.



Avsure
Aviation Insurance Brokers and Consultants

Contact us for a free no obligation quotation on any aviation insurance requirement you have

Avsure provides the most competitive insurance programmes available in the Aviation Industry. When considering your aircraft insurance, you definitely need the best ADVICE, EXPERIENCE and RESOURCES. At Avsure, WE DELIVER.

Avsure - where aviation insurance isn't just a sideline, it's all we do!

A division of Boston Marks Group Limited

AIRCRAFT

- Pleasure & Business Aircraft
- Charter • Aircraft Sales
- Flying Schools • Aero Clubs
- Agricultural • Helicopters

AVIATION LIABILITY

- Premises • Airports • Products
- Chemical • Hangarkeepers

PROPERTY

- Hangars and Contents

PERSONAL

- Pilot Personal Accident
- Passengers • Pilots term life

P: 09 298 8206 or 0800 322 206 F: 09 298 8218
 E: insure@avsure.co.nz www.avsure.co.nz



Accident and Incident Reports are provided courtesy of



Type: Robinson R44 ISG
Location: Opuawhanga **POB:** 1
Operation: Agricultural **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 13 June 2012
Report: Helicopter struck power lines during an agricultural spraying operation. The helicopter was damaged but a safe landing was made.

Type: NZ Aerospace FU24-950 EMA
Location: Tarras **POB:** 0
Operation: Agricultural **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 4 July 2012
Report: The aircraft was left unattended on the airstrip, with the engine running and the propeller in feather, and with the pilot standing nearby. The propeller moved to the fine position, causing the aircraft to move approximately 20m, striking the loading vehicle.

Type: Piper PA-28-181 FWS
Location: Raglan **POB:** 4
Operation: Training Dual **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 27 May 2012
Report: Aircraft overran the runway and went through the fence on a take-off attempt.

Type: Cessna 172M EZK
Location: Otorohanga **POB:** 3
Operation: Private Other **Injuries:** 1s
Date: 25 April 2012
Report: Aircraft landed with a strong tailwind and ended up rolling into a ditch at the end of the runway.

Type: Robinson R44 II HFF
Location: Wellsford **POB:** 1
Operation: Agricultural **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 23 April 2012
Report: During an agricultural operation while the pilot was focusing on the area to be sprayed, he suddenly realised that he was too close to some power lines in the area and reacted by aft cyclic and increased collective input. The control inputs resulted in the helicopter pitching up and rotating to the right before descending rapidly and impacting the ground.

Type: Grob Twin Astir GWZ
Location: Stratford **POB:** 2
Operation: Training Dual **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 9 April 2012
Report: Glider on short final was required to take avoiding action against a glider and tow plane on takeoff from the same runway. The avoiding action caused the glider's left wing to contact the ground, resulting in a 180 degree ground loop, breaking the tail boom off.

Please note: These weekly accident reports are sourced from www.caa.govt.nz and contain information as reported to the CAA recently. As such, the accuracy of the information supplied cannot be guaranteed. Refer to www.caa.govt.nz for other details which may be added as more information is received by the Authority.