



# Palmerston North Power Player

## Fieldair Holdings Limited

Although most of the aviation industry knows the name of Fieldair, unless they are a regular customer, there are many who may not be aware of the full extent of the company's capabilities. KiwiFlyer recently spoke with General Manager of Fieldair Holdings, Charles Giliam to write this profile on a business with 50 years of New Zealand Aviation history behind it.

**THIS SPECIALISED** aviation group has grown quietly and confidently over the years and now handles a wide scope of activities. These include full MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) aviation engineering, air freight and aviation design abilities. The company operates from bases in Palmerston North and Auckland as well as a line station in Christchurch.

### Humble Beginnings

The original business was founded in 1951 by Lawson Field as one of the nation's first specialist aerial topdressing companies. Through sheer determination, dedication and pioneering spirit their fleet grew to an impressive 45 aircraft comprising both fixed and rotary wing. In November 1999 Fieldair Holdings Limited was acquired by the Freightways Group. Freightways is a leading provider of express package services and information management with a presence in Australia and New Zealand.

Riding on the wings of 50 years experience in the industry, Fieldair Holdings Limited encompasses three major companies. These are Fieldair Engineering Limited, Air Freight NZ Limited and NTech Limited.

### Fieldair Engineering Limited

Easily their most visible commercial activity, Fieldair's engineering division employs more than 85 full time workers plying their trade on maintaining, overhauling, repairing and manufacturing aircraft parts and associated instruments. Most of these activities take place at their headquarters at Palmerston North International Airport. Their scope has increased tremendously over the years, and now includes:

- Convair CV 580/5800
- Airbus A320
- Boeing 737-300
- Cessna Caravan, 182
- Britten-Norman BN-2
- Diamond DA 40 & 42
- Piper Cherokee & Seneca
- and many more types of light aircraft.

Key customers include domestic cargo carrier Air Freight NZ, niche carriers Air Chatham's, Massey University's School of Aviation, air2there.com and the New Zealand Defence Force. In a year, Fieldair typically completes 5,800 jobs spanning all of its divisions.

Such was the demand for Fieldair's engineering services that this division has experienced a 54% increase in staff numbers in the last 8 years. One of their hangars was expanded recently to increase capacity.

Fieldair Engineering is certified for NZCAA Part 19F (Supply), Part 145 (Maintenance), Part 148 (Manufacturing); CASA CAR 30 (Heavy Aircraft) and AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008.

Fieldair's **Engine Repair Section** is able to overhaul a wide range of modern Continental and Lycoming engines and has



Fieldair Holdings Limited comprises divisions for Engineering Services, Air Freight, and Engineering Design and Technical Support.



A Fieldair staff photograph in front of Brendan Deere's Spitfire which some of the team recently worked on.



recently been accepted as an approved service centre (ASC) for Lycoming, one of only two in New Zealand. They also have the unique distinction of being one of the few firms able to overhaul radial engines in the world and also the only such firm in New Zealand.

The **Manufacturing Division** is able to build new airframe components and also repair damaged flight control components. They enjoy access to latest technologies and can cater to the needs of almost any customer.

The **Supply Division** is able to procure aeronautical spares and components in addition to supporting the company's own activities. They are also able to supply 'hard to source' parts to a fixed price.

The in-house **Instrument Services Department** is able to overhaul, repair and calibrate as well as offer full avionic and ELT installation and inspection for a wide range of general aviation, military, commercial fixed-wing and rotary aircraft. They have the honour of being the service centre for Artex and the Astronautics Corporation as well as also holding a very recent accreditation from Garmin Aerospace.

The **General Engineering Division** specialises in freight handling systems for road transport and short-term manufacturing contracts in steel and aluminium alloys.

### Air Freight NZ Limited

Commencing operations in 1989, Air Freight NZ forms an air bridge between the North and South Islands. It has a fleet of four Convair 580 freighters and one Convair 5800 based in Auckland and Christchurch. The fleet maintains a weekday schedule undertaking night cargo flights between Auckland, Christchurch and Palmerston North.

On a daily basis the fleet shifts approximately 60 tonnes of freight, mail and most types of general cargo. The Convair's speed and capacity mean they are ideally suited to the operation and continue to be the aircraft of choice.

### NTech Limited

NTech was formed in December 1992 and was acquired by Fieldair in 2005. Being an NZCAA Part 146 (design) organisation, this company's objective is to provide comprehensive engineering design services and technical support services to the aviation industry. Their customer base is both local and international, with design work extending from World War I fighters to modern composite commercial aircraft.



### Summarising Success

General Manager Charles Giliam is proud to note that Fieldair's customers have always been satisfied with its performance. He quotes Craig Emeny (CEO of Air Chathams) saying how happy they are with Fieldair's well rounded maintenance service, their quick response time, attention to detail, and their customer care and dedication.



Fieldair Engineering's scope covers a broad range of aircraft, from Air Freight NZ's Convairs through to Airbus A320, Boeing 737-300, Diamond DA40 and 42, Britten-Norman BN-2, plus a wide variety of light aircraft.

It is on these strengths that Fieldair strives to be the best it can possibly be across all divisions. Charles says that the company is more than happy to grow quietly and confidently whilst still

being able to deliver the best service possible for now and in the future. For more information, see contact details below.

## Engineering for Aviation

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- ➔ Airframe Maintenance & Overhaul
- ➔ Engineering Design
- ➔ Instrument Overhaul
- ➔ Electrical Overhaul
- ➔ Engine Maintenance & Overhaul
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CAA Part 145, 146, 148, 19F; CASA CAR 30; NZS/AS ISO 9001:2000  
fieldair.co.nz