

# On-line Safety and Compliance at Skywork Helicopters

**SKYWORK HELICOPTERS** operate a modern, multi-disciplined fleet from three locations in the North Island. It is a family run business with a proud history that dates back to the early 1960's. Since operations began under the Skywork name in 1997, the company has expanded rapidly and now the current fleet of more than seven aircraft (including K-Max, Eurocopters and a Jet Ranger), carries out a range of services from Precision Lifting and Seismic Operations to Aerial Shooting, Fire and Forestry Support.

## A Safety Culture

Skywork was the first helicopter company to win the prestigious 'Director of Civil Aviation's Award for Safety Excellence in an organisation'. During the last 12 months, Skywork have continued to enhance their safety culture with implementation of the Air Maestro online safety and compliance system. General Manager of Skywork, Glenn Stevenson outlines why he selected this system to manage the company's rapidly expanding fleet and international client base:

"To maintain our standards and accommodate this growth we had to look at how to streamline information sharing, management of crew internationally and communication within the company. What we did, we did very well - staff have always been well organised and methodical but you got the sense sometimes that there must be a far easier way to achieve things. Recording and managing flight records, pilot hours, service records and rosters as we expanded operations and engaged new staff took more and more effort. It drained resources and there never seemed to be any time to use the information we did gather more productively. We knew that we had to improve our systems and harness the benefits of some new technologies in certain areas of the business."

One key area that Skywork knew technology could have a direct impact was safety and compliance because it has such a prescriptive set of statutory requirements.

Glenn recalls a colleague mentioning that they had seen a system being used by several high profile helicopter operators which seemed ideal; "The more I looked into it, the more the task of improving the way we managed safety and compliance within our business became an imperative; with very tangible benefits" says Glenn.



*Skywork operate the only K-Max on the New Zealand register, seen here on a recent lifting job.*

## The Air Maestro System

The system Glenn speaks of was Air Maestro and he says that he was not disappointed with his first encounter; "It had all the key features, ease of use, reporting capabilities, etc. I had on my wish list with the added benefit of being accessible over the web. So I didn't need to spend a vast amount of time customising screens or build extensive report templates. It was also recommended by operators who were used to working within the requirements of the Aviation Industry framework. And because it is accessible from just about anywhere, we could report on important details, like flight and duty, in real-time."

Skywork began using Air Maestro in 2009 and has quickly built up the safety and compliance function to take advantage of improved access to information. Glenn describes a "reduction in time spent processing paper and re-entering spreadsheet data." He notes that the new system "quickly streamlined processes and proved to be just as accurate, saving endless hours compiling individual audit trails."

## Expanding Offshore

Skywork has recently entered a new phase of development and growth with the creation of an offshore division which will enable ongoing expansion of operations outside its home market.

This is an exciting time for the company and is also a phase of growth that has

focused thoughts on the flow of information across the business. Glenn explains; "This is a very significant investment for Skywork and we need to ensure the right systems and lines of communication are in place. Safety and compliance in our industry are critical, especially in terms of attracting and securing new customers. There's no question that it is equally as important to demonstrate you have robust systems in place, as it is to show that you have a good operational record."

## Maintaining an Enviable Reputation

Glenn says that "Safety and compliance is the backbone of our business and one that we have built a growing customer base and enviable reputation upon". He has become a big supporter of Air Maestro and sees it as a key tool to protect a reputation they are fiercely proud of. Glenn can be contacted by email at: [glenn@skyworkgroup.com](mailto:glenn@skyworkgroup.com)

Developed by Avinet, Air Maestro® is a web-based aviation safety and flight operations management tool that has been commercially available since 2006. It is the first built-for-aviation, fully integrated management system and is currently supporting customer operations across Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Africa and Europe.

For more information about Air Maestro, visit [www.airmaestro.co.nz](http://www.airmaestro.co.nz) or meet the team in the Exhibition Hall during Aviation Industry Week at Palmerston North, 26th to 30th July.