



One Stop Support: In the Hangar at Aeromotive

AEROMOTIVE'S hangar at Hamilton provides not only general aircraft servicing and maintenance, but also a convergence point for the group of specialist bays that the company operates. These have all been discussed in previous issues of KiwiFlyer (download articles from www.kiwiflyer.co.nz) and include Avionics, Electrical, Fuel, Engines, Cylinders, Propellers and Stores. There is also a close relationship with subsidiary Engine Components NZ Limited across the field and of course, Aeromotive South at Timaru.

One Stop Shop Capabilities

Customers of Aeromotive are therefore effectively supported by a genuine one stop shop, as virtually no outsourcing is required. If it is, then it is more than probable that this capability will be available within the wider Oceania Group. Engineering Manager Brett Puddle says that this comprehensive in-house capability translates to a fast turnaround, especially for problem solving and whenever unscheduled maintenance issues are uncovered as part of normal checks. For example, a cylinder problem can go straight to the cylinder bay for immediate attention. Chances are then that the aircraft could still be flying again at the end of the day. Other maintenance providers are likely to send specialist work away which can add days of transit and waiting time to a repair.

Specialist capabilities within the hangar itself are offered by skin, airframe and engine focused staff who undertake a wide variety of work that extends well beyond traditional checks and servicing. When KiwiFlyer visited, work in the hangar included a new P-750 XSTOL having post certification modifications completed for a customer in Papua New Guinea (including upgraded landing gear and luggage pod fittings). A CT-4 Air Trainer wing re-splice job was underway, requested as a precautionary measure by the RNZAF due to the aircraft age and loadings they get subjected to in aerobatic training and demonstrations. A Cessna 172 was in for an engine overhaul and airframe corrosion removal. A Pilatus Porter was in for a general check and a calendar inspection

on the propeller. And an Auster was also present for its periodic check.

The broad range of equipment, skills, and experience that Aeromotive have on offer are particularly evident when it comes to trouble shooting difficult problems. One recent example is that of a long running engine surging problem in a Piper Navajo.



Top: Plenty of variety on the day KiwiFlyer visited. Above: Re-splicing a CT-4 wing for the RNZAF.

The customer flew up to Aeromotive after three other closer maintenance providers hadn't been able to trace the fault (some parts had actually been previously taken off and sent to Aeromotive for testing). The cause was found to be a perished and leaking injector rubber. Engineering Manager Brett Puddle says it is often the simple things that are easily missed and that the Aeromotive team take pride in being "curved ball specialists". Another recent example, also on a Navajo, involved an intermittent fault that had been giving trouble for some 1000 hours. The problem involved frequent hard starting and inconsistent magneto problems. A diagnostic process eventually traced this to a chaffed wire earthing on the airframe.

Customers and Staff

Aeromotive regularly look after around 30 private owners (ranging from very low to very high utilisation). Waikato Aero Club maintenance is performed at Aeromotive, and they also provide support to several agricultural operators. Beyond specific aircraft maintenance, the company has relationships with many other maintenance providers whether that be by the provision of specialist services or just part of the informal 'maintenance advice network' that comes from having a cooperative approach within and outside of the company.

The team in the hangar are led by Alan Thomson, himself just back from assembling a P-750 XSTOL that Aeromotive had containerised and sent to a Pacific Aerospace customer in the USA.

Supported by local engineers, that job took just 6 days from container arrival to test flight.

At Hamilton, Alan has a hangar team of up to six staff at any one time, depending on workload sharing between Aeromotive's own hangar and the Aeromotive team who maintain CTC Aviation's fleet on location at their own facility. There is plenty of experience to draw on from amongst the team – Ross Weinberg has a background that includes James Aviation and SuperAir, Karl Yarrington worked for the South African AirForce and holds Boeing ratings, and Alan himself has been in the industry for 30 years. Other hangar staff include Tim Wedekind who has just earned his Group 1 engine and airframe ratings, and Thomas Kiddle who is now full-time at Aeromotive after completing aviation maintenance qualifications at NMIT. Brett says they are all ably supported by Roseanne Wood who looks after log entries and technical record keeping.

The Aeromotive team follow a philosophy of continuous improvement and are also encouraged to undergo training as opportunities arise.

For more information

Brett and Alan welcome enquiries for any fixed wing aircraft maintenance or other support work. Contact them on 07 843 3199, E: brett.puddle@aeromotive.co.nz or visit www.aeromotive.co.nz

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