

Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust integrates compliance and safety systems with Air Maestro

THE Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust owns and operates two BK117-850 D2 aircraft – the *Westpac Rescue Helicopters* – on behalf of the community it serves which covers an area from Te Hana North of Auckland to Mercer in the South, also encompassing the Coromandel Peninsula and islands of the Hauraki Gulf.

The service has changed substantially since the original venture between Auckland Surf Lifesaving Association and helicopter pilot George Sobiecki back in the summer of 1970, when a swimmer was rescued from the Bethell's Beach rip by a life guard leaping from a hovering Hiller 12E. This collaboration of surf life-saver and helicopter is generally acknowledged as being the first in the world using this technique, and has since gone on to become a 'standard' rescue service around the globe.



One of ARHT's two BK117s at work. Due to receive their first AW-169 in 2015, the Trust has recently adopted Air Maestro as a safety and operational management tool.

In 1990, the Auckland Regional Rescue Helicopter Trust was formed to manage and build the service, which at that time leased a single BK117. In 2007 the Trust was in a position to purchase its own BK117, with a second acquired in 2010. Both machines were upgraded to the 850 D2 configuration.

Managing the Trust's Training and Safety program is the responsibility of long-time ARHT pilot Armin Egli. Recognising the need for a stringent training and currency management system for all operational (and some administrative) staff, he set about the task of identifying exactly what the organisation's needs were, and whether there was any existing package that could 'fit the bill'. Also to consider was the planned introduction of an AW-169 which has been ordered for delivery in 2015 (plus an option for a second two years later), so any system selected had to be able to easily deal with the transition and integration of new aircraft into the Trust's operations.

The Air Maestro System

Air Maestro was identified as being able to potentially meet most, if not all of ARHT's requirements, and following a successful trial of the system through late 2011/early 2012, the system has now been adopted by the Trust.

Operating within the aero medical and rescue industry, it was crucial that ARHT found a system which was customisable and improved access to important information in a timely manner. Implementation has in fact been easier than expected. Armin says that; "With the Air Maestro system being so 'multi-faceted', the introduction, setting up, tailoring and associated training was expected to take some time, however the system is being

implemented relatively fast and efficiently".

It was also very important that the system could satisfy regulatory compliance requirements. Armin explains: "With all the changes happening within the aviation industry of late, particularly with the NZCAA mandated introduction of a Safety Management System (SMS) in conjunction with a Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS), we were looking for a system which integrated these elements into one simple solution and we have found it in Air Maestro".

Air Maestro benefits all users across the ARHT operation because the system has been designed with the user in mind – it aims to give key personnel control of core operational and safety information to effectively manage their business and assist with achieving regulatory compliance. The greatest benefit, says Armin, is that "Air Maestro [within its base framework] is configurable to meet the specific needs of our safety and operational requirements. Whilst the learning curve is relatively steep with some aspects of the program, we are confident that with the fantastic support we are getting from the Air Maestro team, this learning curve will be manageable."

He also notes that since the company adopted Air Maestro, ARHT is well on its way in improving its operations and awareness of safety culture, explaining that; "Although it has only been a few months, I think Air Maestro will help us to put ARHT on a solid footing by further improving our safety and training culture in time to meet the challenges that the delivery of a brand new helicopter will bring".

This is an exciting phase for ARHT, with the lead-up to taking ownership of brand new state-of-the-art AW-169s. Armin says they are very happy to have Air Maestro along for the ride, and helping to maintain the high standard of operation that their business partners, stakeholders and that the community they support have come to expect.

More About Air Maestro

Developed by Avinet, Air Maestro is a fully-integrated web-based safety and operational management tool that achieves organisational safety, efficiency and compliance via four core features: Safety Management, Resource Planning, Operational Control and Reporting.

For more information about Avinet and their product Air Maestro, visit www.avinet.com.au or come and meet the team at AIA Aviation Week in Rotorua between 4th and 10th August.



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NZHA

Getting down to the business of improving helicopter safety in New Zealand

OUR Helicopter sector represents one of the greatest global growth opportunities we have for this country. We know how to train, we consistently deliver quality and we provide services and support with fineness. Our aspirational goal is to do this with an ever increasing and relentless focus of safety combined with increasing efficiencies.

We have discussed and debated with the regulator our ability to operate machinery and personnel overseas for prolonged periods and after much robust debate the CAA are supporting the commonly held goal of fostering growth. Conference outlines this agreement and removes roadblocks.

Taking a salami approach we are onto the next issues; the obstacles put up by rule Part 135.505 and LIB 4. However the big focus is on safety. NZHA has been running a safety advancement programme for two years now and at this conference we'll be working through a number of very live examples. Two of the helicopter attendees have agreed to speak up about a couple of lessons they learnt in the last few months – it's about both skill and courage but these are "free" lessons from which the community can learn whether it be private owner/operators or commercial pilot/operators. All are welcome.

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