



# Strong demand at Aviation Painting Services

*Having opened the doors for business little more than six months ago, Aviation Painting Services (APS) has already experienced a strong demand for their work and recently celebrated completion of their 16th fully refinished aircraft.*



*Arriving on 28th December, ZK-EAG returned to the air on 9th January after a complete strip and repaint.*

**OPERATING** from a purpose built facility at Hamilton Airport, APS (a joint venture between IGS Group and the Waikato based Aviation Industry Cluster), is equipped with a temperature controlled and fully sealed 900m<sup>2</sup> hangar able to be quickly heated to 60 degrees Celsius when required. Using the latest paint formulas and application techniques, this permits aircraft to be stripped, painted and cured within very short leadtimes, making the facility particularly attractive for operators of working aircraft where time on the ground equates directly to lost income. APS CEO Phil Hanrahan explains that; “The oven speeds up throughput tremendously because it dries an aircraft in 30 minutes, allowing us to apply the next coat within the hour. Aircraft painted in typical hanger conditions often take several days to dry between coats, depending on temperature and humidity. We can apply 11 coats of paint in five days, which is impossible at any other painting facility in New Zealand.”

It's not just about a fast job though and General Manager Phil Byrne makes it clear that quality is at the forefront of all jobs undertaken by the company. APS use only aerospace painting systems from PPG and Akzo Nobel, and have designed all of their processes to achieve CAA Part 145 certification. All work is fully documented throughout each job. The company works closely with, and utilises key staff from Fieldair Engineering in regards to aircraft engineering, and brings in specialist painting expertise from local company Fleet Image Aviation as required. Partnering with these large and well

established organisations provides APS with a dedicated but flexible workforce with additional resource on tap whenever it is needed.

The new APS facility is impressive. A single hydraulically operated hangar door, 30m wide and 8m tall, seals the cavernous main spray booth / oven which is heated by natural gas (consuming up to 1800 litres worth each fortnight). Adjoining this are sealed service rooms for storage, preparation and mixing, as well as a smaller spray booth to accommodate helicopter and small aircraft fuselages. Seven of the sixteen aircraft painted since the facility opened have been helicopters. The most complicated job to date has been a complete strip to bare metal of an Eagle Air B1900D, then repainted in the new Air New Zealand All Black livery. Completed in just 9 days, some areas such as the fern required over 10 layers of electrostatically applied PPG aviation paint to achieve the finish required.

Phil says that APS can offer a full range of stripping and painting services depending on the preference of the aircraft owner. These include chemical and hydroblast stripping, electrostatic and standard paint refinishing, infrared curing and bake oven heating. He says there has been a great response from the local community with plenty of walk-in work for wings, panels and cowlings, etc., and many refinishing quotes currently in progress. In the pipeline are a Metroliner, KingAirs, more of the Eagle fleet, and several helicopters – with the remainder of this year already committed to 50% of capacity. Interest is also being received from overseas, with a recent quote being requested by a foreign company with a very complicated paint scheme on a Twin Otter. The owners are unhappy with the present paint job on the aircraft and seek for it to be started again from the beginning. APS's reputation is already spreading.

## For more information

Contact General Manager Phil Byrne on 07 958 4799, e: philbyrne@fieldair.co.nz or visit [www.aviationpaintingservices.co.nz](http://www.aviationpaintingservices.co.nz)

*Images at right: 1. Arrival on 28 Dec.; 2. Stripped on 2nd Jan.; 3. Primed on 3rd Jan.; 4. First top coats also applied on 3rd Jan.; 5. Graphics on 5 Jan.; 6. Final details on 6 Jan.*

