



# Maintaining the CTC fleet

*When CTC Aviation moved to Hamilton Airport with significant expansion plans a little over three years ago, a major decision to make involved the approach towards fleet maintenance. A particular issue to manage was the company's principle of functioning like an airline, meaning that even the*

*smallest defect would hold an aircraft on ground until repaired. Maintenance must be particularly proactive and responsive. A partnership was formed with Aeromotive who have risen to the challenge, delivered the requirement and grown alongside CTC in a very co-operative relationship.*



Aeromotive occupy a dedicated hangar on the CTC apron. The 3 aircraft shown belong to a fleet of 35.

## Operations and Growth

The centre of operations is an office shared by CTC's Airworthiness Controller Steve Kesby and Aeromotive's Service Manager for CTC, Ross Ward. In three years the number of CTC aircraft under their watch has grown from 11 to 35 and staff have expanded from 3 to 12. Shiftwork has also come into play to meet the growth experienced and to provide cover for CTC's hours of operation.

Keeping the maintenance growth at pace with the fleet has also included ongoing training and upskilling for staff who have been required to support such technologies as diesel engines, full glass cockpits and composite airframes.

## Airline maintenance standards

CTC's training approach demands airline standards of behavior from students right from the start. This necessarily extends to defect reporting and maintenance regimes, creating a significant increase in unscheduled maintenance operations since the smallest problem will dictate that an aircraft remains on ground until remedied. This has obvious implications for workload planning and aircraft availability, meaning that Aeromotive's maintenance staff must be very responsive to problems detected by any of CTC's 200 plus students or

instructors on site. As a result, unscheduled work for issues such as nav light failures or tyre flat spots can account for up to 50% of maintenance workload.

## A typical day

Steve and Ross begin each day with a review of flight operations covering what is flying, what is due or needs to be planned, availability scheduling, priority agreement and workload planning.

A typical day will include two or three scheduled services with two thirds of the aircraft being on a 50 hour schedule. Engine and gearbox changes also crop up frequently with the DA42 engines on a 1000 hour cycle and gearboxes on just a 300 hour cycle. Then add the variety of whatever unscheduled work comes along.

Unscheduled issues aren't always run of the mill either – a little over a year ago one of the DA42's suffered a lightning strike on the nose (and out the right wing) which delaminated the wing tip and dealt a fatal blow to several electronic systems in the process. The effects were almost as interesting for the Engineers as the occurrence was exciting for the Pilots.

## For more Aeromotive information

Contact Brett Puddle on (07) 843 3199 or email: [brett.puddle@aeromotive.co.nz](mailto:brett.puddle@aeromotive.co.nz).



Aeromotive CTC Service Manager, Ross Ward (centre) with trainee engineers and one of eight DA42's under Aeromotive's care. A major current project is their conversion from 1.7 to 2.0 litre engines.

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