

Aerial application of 1080 it's a precision business.....

John Sinclair, Executive Officer for the New Zealand Helicopter and Agricultural Aviation Associations absolutely rejected suggestions today that aerial application of 1080 poison is anything other than a precision business backed up by best safety and environmental practice in terms of our Industry's AIRCARE™ accreditation programme.

"Its not our place to debate whether or not aerial drops of 1080 are the best way to manage pests, but where these drops take place then it is incumbent upon us all to carry them out with the least possible risk to adjoining properties, people's water supplies and bodies of water.

Use of accredited operators provides the public with assurance that the operator and its pilots are not only trained to global best practice in the application of poison baits, but best practice is assured through an independent audit of their systems, people and processes. This is far in excess of the minimum specifications under present New Zealand statutes."

Our programme mandates that these operators must use application systems and techniques which are capable of being monitored and independently reviewed should concerns be raised by the public. The predictable ballistics of 1080 baits, coupled with the reliability of modern GPS, allows our pilots to place these tiny amounts of baits very accurately. In possum control we are often talking about one bait per 100 square metres.

John Sinclair said "DoC tenders and selects the most appropriate operator for the job. What AIRCARE offers is best practice through a robust code of practice written specifically for aerial poison drops".

Our industry is very conscious of all its environmental impacts – for example in recent times AIRCARE™ accredited operators have invested very heavily in noise abatement training – this is in addition to the regular and on going training received in terms of handling chemicals and other products applied via aerial applications. It's very easy to determine if an operator is accredited – get the name of the company and go to our web page www.aircare.co.nz where all accredited operators are listed.

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