



PRESS RELEASE 31 July 2014

Aviation NZ comments on its role in leading adventure tourism aviation safety

Aviation NZ, the industry body representing the aviation sector in NZ, has recognised for some time the need to help the aviation adventure tourism industry lift its safety standards generally, and particularly, with respect to drug and alcohol issues, which has the potential to be a looming problem.

CEO Samantha Sharif says "the NZ aviation adventure tourism industry comprises many one-man band operators, who really need the peer review and support networks that Aviation NZ can provide. It is only by talking openly and working with industry peers that individual operators can be sure that their safety management systems are robust and that they are adopting best practices in terms of drug and alcohol policies."

Aviation NZ is focused on leading improvements in industry safety, particularly through its AIRCARE™ Programme. This programme was developed by aviators, for aviators. It seeks to raise minimum performance standards and to put in place risk based protocols that will enhance safety and accountability of pilots, their companies, and their clients; and at the same time ensure increased passenger safety and confidence.

The AIRCARE™ programme has been operating for over 3 years now, and has had a great uptake from leading Aviation Companies looking to be the best at what they do. It covers such things as Safety Management Systems, crew resource management (including fatigue, flight and duty times, and suitability to fly), as well as addressing Environmental, Noise, Firefighting and Aerial Application issues. These standards are constantly being revised and upgraded.

Each company that applies to become AIRCARE™ accredited is independently audited against a standard performance matrix. Depending on how well the performance criteria are met, it is accredited for between 1 and 3 years. Operators are required to demonstrate continued compliance with all facets of the Code.

AIRCARE™ Accreditation is being sought by more and more organisations as an enhanced form of compliance with a clear set of minimum standards, and industry leaders are questioning why some Government departments are not demanding this extra level of assurance.

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While we cannot comment on a particular balloon operation, it is noticeable within industry the effect that the AIRCARE™ programme has had on operators:

- lifting their minimum CAA required standards
- demanding that pilots are:
 - well rested
 - free of drugs (with random testing regimes to check this)
 - prepared for flight by applying Safety Management Systems to their organisations (with a robust document trail to prove this)

AIRCARE™ is an assurance system that ensures aviation is ready to deliver top quality performance and safety.

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Notes for Editors:**BACKGROUND****Key facts about Aviation New Zealand**

Aviation New Zealand exists to lead, inspire and grow the New Zealand aviation industry.

It was established in 1950 to encourage the safe growth of the aviation industry in New Zealand. In more recent years, it has also become involved in helping the international development of its members.

- Aviation New Zealand has over 600 members
- Members include agricultural companies, air operators (fixed wing and rotary), aircraft designers and manufacturers, airports, aviation trainers, emergency and medical services companies, helicopter companies and parts manufacturers.



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Key facts about aviation in New Zealand

An 'early adopter' in aviation terms – first international customer for Boeing; first pilot training school 1916; first airmail 1919; and quick appreciation of the suitability of aviation for agriculture, tourism and forestry.

4502 aircraft in New Zealand, one per thousand people, giving New Zealand one of the highest aircraft per capita ratios in the world.

Decades of policy innovation to support competition, safety and growth; 30m km² of safely managed airspace; and exports to over 80 countries on all continents.

Aircraft fit-outs, new aircraft (including UAVs), GPS track and tracing systems, high precision processes (for example bait and fire fighting), composites, titanium powders, and aviation industry business and operational systems are just some of the exciting technologies and practices developing in New Zealand which set the scene for growth in the next 100 years.