

It is disappointing to learn that some helicopter operators believe that corners are being cut and safety compromised in the helicopter industry' said John Nicholson, Chief Executive of Aviation New Zealand.

He was commenting on a New Zealand Helicopter Survey completed for the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand (CAA) in August 2016. The survey gathered information from industry participants about their views on issues underlying safety performance.

New Zealand has a good reputation internationally for providing a safe aviation environment. 'This is a tribute to the regulator, the companies that make up the aviation industry, and the relationship that exists between the regulator and industry', said Nicholson.

Safety is critically important in the aviation industry. Anything that compromises safety affects the country's reputation. Industry association Aviation New Zealand for example, was created in 1950 by industry to encourage the safe development of aviation in the country.

Aviation New Zealand (including the New Zealand Helicopter Association - NZHA) has been involved for many years in programmes to encourage and promote aviation safety. Sometimes this has been in association with the regulator and at other times, this has seen industry take the lead.

AIRCARE™ was developed and introduced by industry. It brings flight safety and environmental safety together in one safety assurance programme. Forty-one helicopter companies are AIRCARE™ accredited. These companies generally achieve a higher level of flight safety and environmental safety than non accredited companies.

CAA and the NZHA regularly produce Activity and Safety Updates and NZHA produces Safety Bulletins. These comment in particular on accidents reported to CAA and generalise the learning from them so that all industry members benefit. As we understand it, the regulator/industry cooperation that results in these reports is leading edge with other industry associations keen to learn from the New Zealand experiences.

The NZHA and Aviation NZ run annual conferences that focus on the issues of the day and tomorrow. This year's conferences in June, among other things, addressed operator fatigue, learning from accident and incident reports, risk management and the importance of role training.

It is important that as an industry, we address the perceptions coming from the August CAA Safety Survey. We (industry and CAA) are responsible for safety. We have to ensure that some of the behaviours apparent in the survey are discouraged and eradicated.

'The programmes that we provide for our members are one way of ensuring this happens', said Nicholson. 'We would welcome other helicopter companies joining us to participate in those programmes'.

For more information:

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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.

- o Aviation New Zealand has over 300 members and over 1300 on its database
- o Members include agricultural companies, air operators (fixed wing and rotary), aircraft designers and manufacturers, the UAV industry, airports, aviation trainers, emergency and medical services companies, helicopter companies, and parts manufacturers.

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.

4639 aircraft in New Zealand, one per thousand people, give 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 100 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.