

Training, leveraging global demand

There are some startling growth projections in the aviation industry. Whether you look at Airbus, Avionics Intelligence, Boeing, CAPA, Flight Global, IATA, Orient Aviation, Rotor & Wing or any of the many other many companies producing outlooks, the messages are the same: there is rapid growth in the Asia Pacific market, applications for fixed wing and rotary aircraft will broaden, skilled labour will be in increasingly short supply and local training capabilities can't cope with the forecasted demand for labour.

Growth is occurring in many markets where regulatory reform is urgently required to ensure safe and managed development of the aviation industry, so that aviation can help fuel economic growth. It is also occurring where the traditional model of governments funding much of the aircraft operator and infrastructure development simply can't be sustained.

Many opportunities, many challenges and considerable confusion as to how to best proceed. Do we move from country to country searching for opportunities? Do we focus on a few and ignore the rest? How do we decide where to focus? Should we leverage off successes we are already having with some countries or aviation customers? Should we start afresh? Can we work with companies from other countries that are better connected than we are? Many questions!

But we are not sitting around navel gazing!! Some things are becoming clear and we are making progress. What do we from a Kiwi viewpoint have to work with to take advantage of some of these training opportunities? Some examples include:

- Massey University with its aviation degree and Otago University for its aviation medicine qualification
- Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology and the Air New Zealand Aviation Institute for aviation engineering
- Airways NZ for air traffic controllers
- A large number of pilot trainers: teaching fixed and rotary wing; for recreational and professional purposes; for fun and careers in agriculture, search and rescue, industrial purposes, tourism and airlines. Advanced pilot training is also taught, especially in the rotary wing industry
- Aviation English is taught by several institutions
- Other universities provide education in the general business skills required to develop sound transport and aviation policy, run airlines, operate airports and manage general aviation companies.

This expertise is underscored by a world class regulator in the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand. It is assisted through the Government to Government and Bilateral Air Services Agreements, and the regulator to regulator relationships that are in place in many of the growth Asia Pacific markets.

But New Zealand is small and our capabilities are not necessarily widely known in those growth markets. We can talk about our decades of aviation policy innovation to support safety, competition and growth; that we safely manage 30m km² of airspace, how there is one aircraft per 1000 people and that we export aviation goods and services to well over 80 countries.

We can also mention comments made about New Zealand companies by customers in the Asia Pacific area, including: 'revolutionised our business', 'breakthrough technology', met our functionality needs and easier to implement than we thought'. However, unless we can communicate these messages to prospects, we'll remain comparatively unknown.

To address this, we are already taking a number of actions:

- Building the relationship with the Government and government agencies so that government and industry talks with the same voice about New Zealand competence. To do this, new promotional material was developed with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise late last year. New Zealand Aviation is available in soft and hard form. It

contains succinct information on how New Zealand companies can meet the needs of new and existing players in international aviation markets. It is supported by 59 photographs and 28 examples of company capabilities and successes.

- Working with a Whole of Government Aviation Group to ensure government and industry policies and practices are aligned.
- Focusing on a (deliberately) limited number of markets and developing strategic relationships with a small number of customers in each market. These are a combination of government and private sector.
- Looking at how we can improve communications with the prospects we are focusing on – making more visits to them and encouraging them to visit New Zealand so that we deepen those relationships.
- Encouraging greater collaboration between New Zealand companies so that we can achieve the scale and breadth of solution required by international customers. This also helps with messaging.

Consequences are that we are doing some different things, seeing New Zealand companies committing to a long term presence in some of these growth markets, and looking at ways of delivering relevant training in-market with some prospects.

What gives us confidence that we can be successful? The responses from New Zealand Government agencies, New Zealand companies, and some of those international prospects that we are focusing on. Also, several of those growth Asia Pacific countries have already turned to New Zealand to deliver their aviation exams. ASPEQ now provides such services to Australia, Macau, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore, and through a new relationship with CAAi, will be delivering such services in the UK and several other countries aligned to EASA.

We are not there yet by a long stretch. The future will contain many challenges. The steps we are taking and the responses being received suggest that we are going in the right direction. But we have to move quickly: the alternative is being left behind, which is not acceptable!

New Zealand Aviation: Practical, innovative and professional