

New Zealand's \$1Bn plus Agricultural Aviation Industry gathers at Rotorua

Minister Carter, the Minister for Primary Industry addresses a large gathering of agricultural aviators on Monday 6 August at the Rotorua Events Centre discussing the Government's commitment to agricultural aviation in this country. Bruce Wills, President of Federated Farmers presents the perspective of the Hill Country Farmer and the session wraps with Rob Davidson looking forward into his crystal ball on what the meat and wool schedules are going to do next season.

NZAAA has been to the forefront in leading a project around Sustainable Farming. Graeme Martin said one of the real problems is a plethora of conflicting regional and local council rules when it comes to aerial applications. The industry is working with many local council's to ensure the rules they write are capable of being complied with and are enforceable. The problem today is the rules in some circumstances don't make a lot of sense and when rules don't make sense that leads to frustrations for all parties engaged in the environmental debate.

John Sinclair, Project Manager for AIRCARE the industry's compliance, assurance and governance mechanism for environmental and safety sustainability said this programme underpins the wider sustainable farming project. Our auditors Navigatus, along with operators who have been through the programme, will be sharing insights into best practice. We are about building best practice in environmental and safety management – without one you don't have the other – the two are intertwined. Around 60 operators throughout the country are now AIRCARE accredited.

Graeme Harris, the recently appointed Director of Civil Aviation will be picking up the theme of collaboration and discussing in more detail how the partnership from the Regulators perspective will work. CAA is on a plan to balance growth in the sector alongside safe operations. Having more than a passing understanding of how to manage all manner of risk is at the essence of the partnership plan.

NZAAA, the peak representative body for agricultural aviation, will be joined by Geraint Bermingham arguably one of New Zealand's foremost risk management practitioners in safety sensitive industries to demonstrate how good risk management is good for business. His presentation along with that of Jim Rankin from the RNZAF brings to the forefront developments in good safety management practices. As

they say safety is cheap try having an accident and delegates will be appraised of the costs of an accident by John Sinclair the Executive Officer for the NZAAA

A number of the conference sponsors will also be discussing technical developments including developments at Ballance, Lime quality improvements – McDonald's Lime and Scion looking at adjuncts and formulations. The Civil Aviation Authority as the regulator of hazardous substances used in the industry will brief the industry on their approach to managing chemical storage, handling and use.

Irene King, Chief Executive of the Aviation Industry Association said "Agricultural aviation has tremendous opportunities to expand throughout the Asia Pacific region. New Zealand pilots and operators are to the forefront in global environment practice and are contributing significantly to the development of good agricultural practice in the likes of South America. It's not simply the people but it's the application of technology such as the precision application of products that really put Kiwis to the forefront". These opportunities will be explored on the Wednesday of conference

Our aspiration is to ensure agricultural aviation in this country contributes its fair share of the growth objective set for the industry of achieving a \$16bn industry by \$2016. To do this the target for the ag sector is to grow its revenue contribution by 9% per annum, a stretch, but achievable target.

For more information

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