

## **Zero harm - the goal for Agricultural aviators**

In the largest gathering of the agricultural aviation community in the recent history of the agricultural aviation sector over 150 delegates, exhibitors and sponsors gathered in Rotorua over the period 4-6 August.

Leading off with an intense programme around building the future senior pilots for the sector and concluding with a Gala dinner recognizing the outstanding contributions of individuals to the industry over the last 12 months, this year's conference will be a watershed.

The way the sector is regulated is changing to be risk assessment based. "This means working collaboratively with the New Zealand Civil Aviation regulator ensuring risks are appropriately identified and treatments put in place to mitigate those risks", said Graeme Martin Chairman of the NZAAA. "This must be done in a systematic and analytical way, which means the industry and regulator will need to take a very focused and controlled approach to addressing the safety of the sector."

"Perception is that the sector's reputation is one of causing death and injury to its employees. This could not be further from the truth" Graeme said. "In recent years the number of serious harm death accidents to pilots who fly fixed wing aircraft in the agricultural sector has been zero since 2008. For helicopter operations there has been one fatality in the last 10 years, which was a very tragic loss of one of our esteemed members of the community".

"The goal is zero harm. To our way of thinking we must not only learn from the free lesson's where nobody is harmed, but also take a predictive preventative approach. This is why the sector has moved to a voluntary compliance regime called AIRCARE which reflects best environmental and safety management practices".

For more information

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