

ANNUAL
REPORT
— 2025



Life Flight

Saves time · Saves lives

1,704
LIVES
YOU
SAVED
THIS
YEAR

THANK YOU FOR HELPING SAVE LIVES

Greetings

It's my privilege to present Life Flight's FY25 Annual Report; it's a reflection of another year of expansion and improvements, and another year of saving lives.

Over the past year, we carried out 1,704 missions, providing critical care whenever and wherever it was needed. Each one of these flights represents a patient in need, and their care was only made possible by the generosity and support of donors, partners, and the dedication of our team.

FY25 was also a year of extraordinary support from our community. From the Westpac Chopper Street Appeal to the success of our sixth Life Flight Gala, the kindness and generosity of our supporters continues to amaze us and help save lives. It's a privilege to see the trust placed in Life Flight, and it's a responsibility we do not take lightly.

This year, we've continued to invest in our fleet to meet the ever-growing demand for our services, having expanded our Air Ambulance fleet, and preparation is well underway for our new Westpac Rescue Helicopter. A new fleet means that new skills are required, and training for our pilots is well underway, so that they can continue to save lives as their aircraft change.

These investments are crucial in to achieving our mission to deliver high-quality, equitable care to communities across New Zealand.



Looking ahead, we're encouraged by the government's continuing focus on transforming and innovating New Zealand's air ambulance system. As this work progresses, we're already demonstrating leadership through innovation, fleet renewal, and our commitment to delivering exceptional care.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend my sincere thanks. Your ongoing support enables us to plan confidently, act decisively, and care for our communities with compassion and excellence.

Together, we're saving lives and creating a safer, more connected future for all New Zealanders.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Stone'.

Richard Stone
LIFE FLIGHT CHAIR

Welcome

The growth of our fixed-wing fleet has allowed us to extend our aeromedical capacity across both our Wellington and Waikato bases.

The first of these aircraft, ZK-LFT, has now entered service after undergoing an extensive refurbishment programme overseen by our partners at Fieldair Engineering in Palmerston North, which wouldn't have been possible without a generous gift from the Lions Club.

We also farewelled our long-serving Westpac Rescue Helicopter, ZK-HLF, a BK-117 search and rescue helicopter, after 21 years of very distinguished service here in the capital.

HLF had flown around 8,000 missions since entering service back in December 2003 and will be replaced in 2025 by a brand new, state-of-the-art Airbus H145 D3 rescue helicopter. This new technology-packed Westpac Rescue Helicopter will allow us to fly even more life-saving missions in the challenging conditions that our Flight teams often encounter at both the bottom of the North Island and the top of the South.

After signing a lease agreement with Hamilton Airport late last year to develop a dedicated aeromedical base at their



“HLF had flown around 8,000 missions since entering service back in December 2003 and will be replaced in mid-2025 by a brand new, state-of-the-art Airbus H145 D3 rescue helicopter.”

airfield, our Ambulance team up in the Waikato has now moved into their new office accommodation. Work is underway on the finishing touches to the base, but it won't be long now until the formal opening.

Teamwork, as always, is key to everything we do at Life Flight, and over the past year our Flight teams have been actively participating in the Government's ongoing review of New Zealand's aeromedical sector. This has included leadership roles for some of our pilots and clinicians across Health New Zealand's Clinical and

continued on next page

Technical Advisory Group and Design Working Groups. They've been looking at how we can make the best use of our Assets, Infrastructure and Workforce moving forward to help ensure that the Dispatch, Coordination and Governance of air ambulances locally is world-class.

Our fundraising performance over the past 12 months has once again been exceptional, with the team securing over \$9M of fundraising income during the year. In particular, our grants-based funding from supporters including Pub Charity and NZCT, together with continuing support from local Rotarians and Lions Clubs members, has helped us to upgrade our aeromedical equipment to meet the increasing needs of the communities that we serve right across Central New Zealand.

The support of our donors and sponsors remains vital to our day-to-day operations. Without their incredible ongoing support throughout the year, we simply wouldn't be able to keep operating

24/7, 365-days-a-year. The continuing generosity of the local communities that we serve quite literally enables us to save time and save lives every single day of the year.

So, on behalf of the entire Life Flight team, I want to say a huge thank you yet again, to everyone who's contributed to our aeromedical missions over the past year and for your crucial support during our 50th year of delivering our life-saving aeromedical services.



Mark Johnston
LIFE FLIGHT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This report is for the financial period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

“The support of our donors and sponsors remains vital to our day-to-day operations.

Without their incredible ongoing support throughout the year, we simply wouldn't be able to keep operating 24/7, 365-days-a-year.”



ZK-LFT

Our vision

To provide exceptional care in the air

Our purpose

We help to save lives by providing outstanding aeromedical care and transport to people in need

Our culture

Our **teamwork** saves lives

Safety underpins everything we do

We **support** each other to help those in need

We find **new ways** to be “best in class”



PHOTO CREDIT:
xwb.aviation

Our crews are ready 24.7

Our strategy in action

Each year we strive to improve on our vision and purpose, here are just some of the things we've done to help achieve this.

OUR TEAMWORK SAVES LIVES

Saving lives takes more than just teamwork in the air – it also relies on strong partnerships. This year our Flight teams have been collaborating with Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora on their Aeromedical Commissioning Programme, offering practical insights from the frontline.

Health NZ - Te Whatu Ora aims to transform Aotearoa New Zealand's air ambulance system to improve patient and community health outcomes. By sharing our knowledge and expertise, Life Flight is helping shape a system that delivers better care and access for everyone who needs it.

WE FIND NEW WAYS TO BE "BEST IN CLASS"

Life Flight's acquisition of three upgraded King Air B200C Air Ambulances represents an investment in delivering best-in-class emergency care.

Equipped with advanced avionics, dual GPS systems, and specialist modifications, these aircraft are purpose-built to meet New Zealand's unique healthcare needs. Supported by generous community contributions, they enhance Life Flight's ability to provide safe, efficient, and equitable access to critical medical services to all New Zealanders.

SAFETY UNDERPINS EVERYTHING WE DO

A big part of safety for pilots is knowing their planes inside and out. That means with the purchase and ongoing upgrades of the new Beechcraft King Air B200Cs our Air Ambulance pilots are training hard. From classroom theory to flying with a training Captain our crew are making sure they're ready to fly.



New planes, **new opportunities**

FY25 marked a major milestone for Life Flight, with the purchase of three additional King Air B200C Air Ambulances.

These aircraft, previously operated by Pel Air in Australia, have gone through a full upgrade to meet New Zealand's regulatory standards and the specific needs of our patients.

A key improvement was the installation of dual GPS systems to comply with local aviation requirements - which has the benefit of ensuring more reliable navigation and accuracy.

In addition to these upgrades, we also completed the overhaul of five of the six engines and completed full undercarriage upgrades across all three aircraft.

Beyond this, two of the three aircraft received major avionics updates. From engine controls to communications, to light systems and weather radar, the avionics in our aircraft are critical to saving lives.

To meet the unique needs of our patients we installed new stretcher trolley systems in each aircraft. Working with Flight Structures, a solution that allows safe and comfortable loading via the King Air's cargo doors was designed, manufactured and certified. By repurposing stretchers from our previous Jetstream aircraft, we also kept costs down.



Spearheaded by the Waikanae Lions Club, more than sixty Lions Clubs from across New Zealand **banded together to play a crucial role in funding the avionics upgrades.**

From garden trails to book fairs, for over **two years they've worked incredibly hard to raise the funds** needed for this critical project and have ultimately **raised \$500,000.**

On behalf of the team at Life Flight we extend a huge thank you to everyone involved at the Lions Club.



ZK-LFL Catching the morning sun.

Each Air Ambulance plane is now fitted with a Medical Air Pump. These are a piece of specialist equipment needed to transport babies in incubators to the critical care they need.

This, alongside other changes such as rebranding the planes, was only made possible due to the generous support and donations of local organisations and community members.

We thank everyone that's contributed – because of you our Air Ambulance fleet is saving more lives than ever.



“These new aircraft are more than additions to our fleet — they’re a commitment to the future of equitable, responsive healthcare.

Each one extends the reach of critical care, helping bridge the gap between isolated patients and the treatment they need”

— LUKE ROHLOFF, FIXED-WING FLIGHT OPERATIONS MANAGER



Waikato Base Hangar

Saving lives in the Waikato **and beyond**

It's now been a year since we first began operating our Air Ambulance service out of our new Waikato base, and what a year it's been.

In just 12 months, our Waikato team has flown 337 patients. That's 337 lives from the Waikato and beyond that have been changed by the incredible work of our flight crew and dedicated flight nurses. We're deeply grateful to the communities that have supported Life Flight for nearly 50 years, enabling us to fly more Kiwis to essential care than ever before.

Meet Georgia

from the Wairarapa

At 30 weeks pregnant, Georgia woke to find her waters had broken far too early. In a panic, Georgia and her husband, Dylan, rushed to Wairarapa Hospital.

Tests confirmed her worst fear: she was in active labour. But Wairarapa Hospital didn't have the resources to manage a baby born this early; she needed a way to Wellington Hospital immediately.

A call was put through to the Life Flight dispatch centre.

Soon, the Life Flight Air Ambulance crew Dan, Sarah and Ian touched down, ready to get Georgia and her baby to specialised care.

"The crew's calmness gave me confidence. I thought I'd panic, but they kept me calm. I kept thinking, 'I'm in the best hands, on my way to the best place.'"

Just 19 minutes later, they landed in Wellington where the NICU team was ready.

The swift intervention allowed the NICU team to delay the birth by two weeks, giving her time to grow stronger every day. When the day finally came, Mirabella was born strong and healthy for a premature baby!



Thank you for helping Georgia and Mirabella when they needed it most.

When reflecting on the birth, Georgia said, "From my first contraction to her coming, it was an hour and a half. So, if they tried to ambulance me that day, I would have given birth on the way to the hospital."

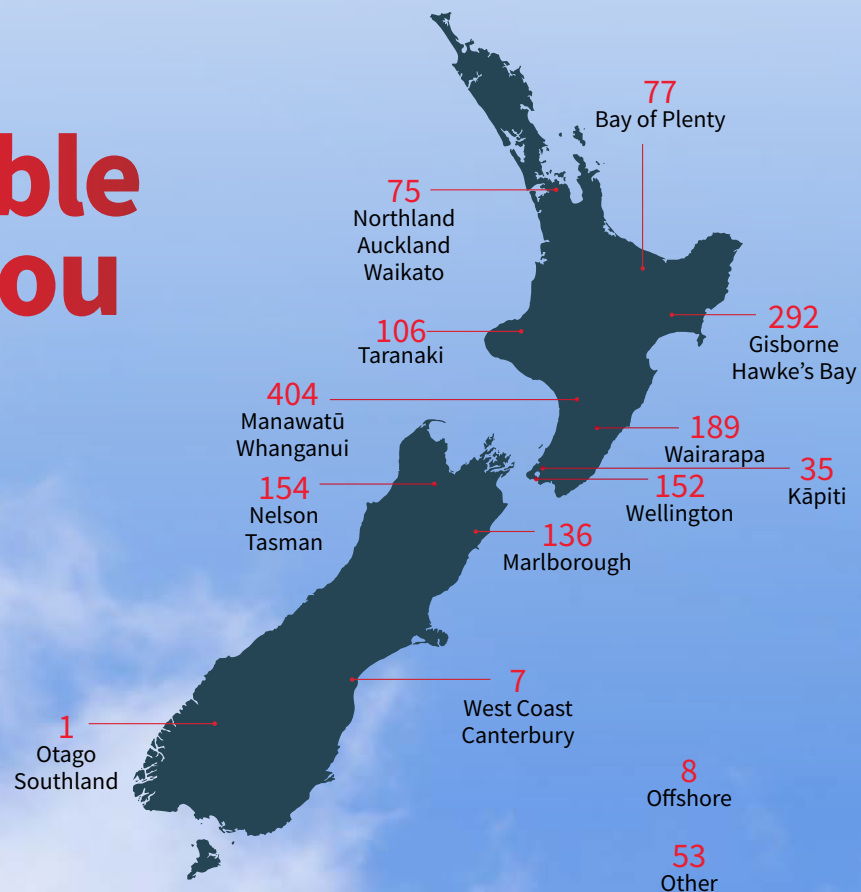
Your generous support ensured Georgia and Mirabella had the best chance at a healthy start.

As a nurse, Georgia is deeply aware that life-or-death emergencies happen all the time in her rural area. "Life or death emergencies like this happen all the time in our rural area. Without Life Flight supporters who make these retrievals possible, there would be so many more tragedies."

"You never know how precious the work of Life Flight is until you're the ones using the service. Without you, we could have lost our daughter. Thank you for keeping our family complete!"

PHOTO CREDIT:
Zeah Pendre

Missions made
**possible
by you**



1,703
PATIENTS FLOWN

601
PATIENT SUPPORT
WHĀNAU FLOWN

262
BABIES/CHILDREN FLOWN



Training

Our crew need to be ready for anything, including adapting to new aircraft, and that means training is an integral part of Life Flight’s day-to-day operations.

Training ranges from utilising new technology and equipment, keeping up with best practices outlined by Health New Zealand - Te Whatu Ora, and ensuring our rescue techniques are up-to-date and efficient.

170

Training missions

94

Westpac Rescue Helicopter training missions

76

Air Ambulance Plane training missions

Fixed Wing Training

With the arrival of the new Beechcraft King Air B200Cs came training for our Air Ambulance crew. They’ve been busy in FY25 focusing on:



Technical theory training



A test flight to ensure pilots are experts in the new controls



All pilots getting at least 10 hours of in-flight training with a dedicated training Captain.

Looking ahead, our pilots will have the opportunity to train using a state-of-the-art simulator recently arrived in Australia.



Helicopter Training Simulator

Our Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew are always training – with SRSL’s touring helicopter simulator allowing pilots to practice complex manoeuvres and emergencies in a risk-free, realistic environment.

But it’s not just our pilots that are always training; our Air Crew Officers and Critical Care Paramedics are constantly finding new ways to improve, whether it’s a medical course, or practicing their winching in various conditions and terrain.



LEFT:
Total overhaul of Pratt
and Whitney engines.

RIGHT:
Sonosite Medical
diagnostic tablet.

Equipped for the job

Thanks to the support of Grant Funders and our dedicated community of supporters, Life Flight has been able to invest in vital new equipment and upgrade essential technologies:

Total overhaul of two Pratt and Whitney engines

Keeping our Air Ambulance fleet reliable and mission-ready is essential. In FY25 we completed a total overhaul of two Pratt and Whitney engines, so that our crew can focus on what matters most – flying patients to the care they need.

Sonosite Medical diagnostic tablet

This ultrasound tablet can make a huge difference in patient care. It allows our Critical Care Paramedics to identify internal injuries, collapsed lungs, cardiac issues, or guide needle placement with greater accuracy.

Glidescope Go Monitor

Now in use on the Westpac Rescue Helicopter, the Glidescope Go Monitor allows our Critical Care Paramedics to visualise a patient's airway. This technology significantly improves the rate of intubation, making a critical difference in high-pressure situations.

Two B. Braun Syringe Pumps

Able to automatically deliver medication to a patient, these syringe pumps are critical for patient care on our Westpac Rescue Helicopter. By ensuring consistent delivery, they not only enhance patient care but also free up our Critical Care Paramedics and Air Crew Officers to focus on other life-saving procedures.

Pulsar Thermal Binoculars

When someone's lost or injured deep in the bush, they can be hard to spot. But your support has made it faster than ever to find them. These thermal binoculars detect patients' body heat, meaning our crew can rescue them quickly.



Pulsar Thermal Binoculars.

Meet Jason

from Kāpiti

7-year-old Jason was taken by his mum Lanita to a doctor's appointment to have some eye drops put in. Shortly after the drops were put in, Jason started saying, 'My eyes, my eyes, I don't feel well'.

Lanita thought it wasn't like Jason, so she took him to her office to keep a close eye on him.

Her instincts were right. Not long after returning to the office, Jason became unresponsive. His lips turned blue. And his heartbeat almost disappeared.

Lanita quickly dialled 111, while her husband began CPR. Thankfully, the ambulance arrived, and Lanita remembers the paramedic immediately calling for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

The Westpac Chopper was airborne just a few moments later.

“I was so relieved, I don't even have the words.”

— LANITA, JASON'S MUM



Jason with his whānau.

When Lanita heard chopper blades in the distance, she felt a sense of overwhelming relief.

The Westpac Chopper landed, and the crew came over and explained they needed to stabilise Jason by placing him in an induced coma.

Once Jason was safe, they loaded him into the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and raced to Wellington Hospital.

Jason was kept in a coma until the next day at the hospital, where his parents anxiously waited to see if he still had any signs of brain function.

It was a long 24-hour wait before Lanita and her husband watched the hospital staff pull out Jason's breathing tube. Sure enough, Jason was thrashing around.

“I was so relieved, I don't even have the words.

All I could say was, ‘I love you darling. You're going to be ok.

And Jason was ok. While it hasn't been an easy (or quick) recovery, Jason is now thriving and loving life.

Thank you for helping save this little boy's life.



LEFT:
Uplift Wairarapa



RIGHT:
Chopper Street Appeal

PHOTO CREDIT:
Radar Photography



Saving lives together

Many of the lives saved last year were thanks to the fundraising only made possible through the kindness of our partners and guests at this year's events. We were extremely grateful to have such support at both our in-house, and partner run events, and want to thank everyone involved.

Uplift Wairarapa

With an incredible effort from Susan Stephen and JC Baxter with the support of Nick Arnold and Susan Arnold-Barron at Trestle and Mortar, Uplift Wairarapa returned for the first time since 2019. This wonderful night of community raised a staggering \$82,000 – exceeding the team's goal by more than \$30,000.

Life Flight Open Day presented by Interislander

Our open day was a chance to welcome the Wellington community to the airbase and thank them for their year-round support. With principal sponsor Interislander, we welcomed over 5,000 visitors and raised over \$40,000.

Life Flight Gala presented by Hiremaster

Once a year our sponsors, partners, donors, and friends come together for a fantastic evening of dining and auctions. Our ever-generous guests raised a fantastic \$121,647, keeping Life Flight flying and saving lives in their community.

Westpac Chopper Appeal Month

Our major sponsor, Westpac, led a fantastic Chopper Appeal month, featuring a nationwide marketing campaign, local quiz night, and the iconic Street Appeal. Thanks to Westpac and our amazing volunteers, over \$100,000 was raised for Life Flight.

27th Cello Champions Charity Luncheon

Thanks to Ian Klinac and the event's sponsors, FY25 Champions Luncheon was bigger than ever. Hosted at the Tākina Conference Centre, 1,070 guests attended to show their support for Life Flight and raised an incredible \$250,000!

The Hurricanes Charity Match, sponsored by Chemist Warehouse

Our partners, the Hurricanes, gave it their all and with the help of Chemist Warehouse, over \$83,000 was raised to support Life Flight – over \$50,000 more than last year! We're blown away by the generosity and support of Chemist Warehouse, the Hurricanes, and all the fans that came out in support.

Thank you

to the organisers for the incredible mahi that went into making these events such a success.



LEFT:
Life Flight Gala



RIGHT:
Champions luncheon

Meet Brendan

from Lower Hutt

Brendan, an avid cyclist, took on a 15KM time trial at the Gladstone Sports complex – one of many competitive races he'd done. But he had no idea how close this race would bring him to death.



Brendan

As he came up to a turn in the road, a wave of horrendous pain and sickness ran through Brendan, so bad, he struggled to hold onto his handlebars.

Urging every part of his being to reach the end of the race, he finally made it to the doctor's tent. But shortly after leaving the tent, Brendan's heart stopped. Fortunately, another racer spotted him, immediately administered CPR, and dialled 111.

Powered by your support, the Life Flight crew, pilot Anna, crewperson Colin, and flight paramedic Nigel were in the air only nine minutes after receiving the call.

The crew loaded him onto the Westpac Chopper, and once safely secured, it only took 28 minutes to reach the Wellington Hospital.



The Westpac Rescue Chopper arriving to help Brendan.

“I had three cardiac arrests on route, three days on full life support, and three weeks in ICU.

You've gifted me an extra 20 years of life. None of this would have been possible without Life Flight's supporters.”

— BRENDAN

“I had three cardiac arrests en route, three days on full life support, and three weeks in ICU. You've gifted me an extra 20 years of life. None of this would have been possible without Life Flight's supporters.”

With months of rehabilitation and hard work, Brendan relearned how to eat, talk, walk, and bike! His recovery was nothing short of miraculous. Months of rehab followed, but by September he was back on his bike and by December, he was winning races. Family is now the most important part of his world; every moment feels like a gift.

Sponsors

The Trust gratefully acknowledges the contributions and support received from the following companies and organisations.

Major Sponsor



Air Ambulance Sponsor



Vehicle Sponsor



FaganMotors Ltd
MASTERTON



Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

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- › Murray Gribben
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- › Juliet Best

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- › Her Excellency, The Right Honourable
Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO,
Governor-General of New Zealand

Grant funders

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

Life Flight would like to thank the following organisations for providing essential goods and services to the Trust. Grants help Life Flight provide 24/7 aeromedical care and are hugely appreciated.



Air Ambulance waiting for its next patient.

Alex Kettles Family Trust

Aotearoa Gaming Trust

Bowen Trust

Carterton District Council

Dorothy L Newman Charitable Trust

Eastern and Central Community Trust

E M Pharazyn Trust

F H Muter Trust

Four Winds Foundation

Gaynor Charitable Trust

Grassroots Central Trust

Hutt City Council

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Longford Trust

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Ray Watts Charitable Trust

Redwood Charitable Trust

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The Lion Foundation

The Maurice Capstick Medical Trust

The Phillip Verry Charitable Trust

Trust House Foundation

WEL Energy Trust

Wellington City Council

Warren and Anne Plimmer Trust

WN Pharazyn Trust

Upper Hutt City Council

Gifts in Wills

Every year, generous donors choose to save lives by leaving a Gift in their Will.

These gifts have allowed them to continue supporting a cause that has meant so much to them in life.

They've ensured that when someone is experiencing an urgent and life-threatening emergency, Life Flight are here - every hour of every day.

Whatever someone's circumstances have allowed them to leave behind, all gifts, large and small, have made a real difference, and left a life-saving legacy behind.

We sincerely thank everyone that has left a Gift in their Will. Because of their generosity, time-critical medical care is there for their community and loved ones when it's needed most.





Government agencies finance approximately half of the funds required to keep our service operational. Despite their invaluable support, this means there is a significant annual funding shortfall, which our wonderful supporters donate toward. Life Flight also keeps at least three months' worth of operating costs in reserves.

Date 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

Cash was Provided From:

Sponsorships, Grants, Interest and Donations	\$8,326,000
Flying Fees	\$10,897,000
Drawing down of Investments	\$2,752,000
Drawing down of Term Loans	\$5,921,000
Goods and Services Tax Received	\$1,949,000
Sub-total	\$29,845,000

Cash was Distributed To:

Purchase of Aircraft	\$9,994,000
Payments to Suppliers and Employees	\$18,442,000
Goods and Services Tax Paid re Importation of Aircraft	\$1,613,000
Sub-total	\$30,049,000
Net increase (decrease) in Cash Held	(\$204,000)

We are a registered charity (#CC24283).



Air Crew Officer, Mike, and the crew returning to base.

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Life Flight

Saves time · Saves lives

Your support this year has kept our aircraft in the sky, saving time and saving lives.

You have helped friends, whānau, neighbours and communities with your generosity - we could not have done it without you!

The Life Flight Trust
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