



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

COLLECTIVE WISDOM	Pg.1
CEO'S COMMENT	Pg.2
NEWS FROM THE WEST	Pg.3
CASA REGULATION MODERNISATION	Pg.4
HELICOPTER INSURANCE	Pg.5-6
TOUCHDOWN	Pg.7



## COLLECTIVE WISDOM

### *A Message From Ray Cronin - AHIA President*

Decisions, decisions, decisions...

A variety of factors and influences drive the need for constant decision making. Some are driven by regulatory compliance, some are inspired by environmental dynamics and, importantly, some originate purely from us as individuals, either planned over a longer time frame or spontaneous.

The shape of our industry is significantly affected by the outcome of decisions that Management, administration, supporting staff, crews and pilots make on an ongoing basis, which dictate the underlying culture of our industry.

Safety culture and long-term fiscal viability of our industry will ultimately determine how successful we are and determine our long-term future. If we look at the scale of organisations that exist within the helicopter industry, we have everything from a one-man-band to very large companies with multiple aircraft and hundreds of employees. It does not matter where you fit into that equation, you are part of the collective outcome of all of those activities bundled together.

Some would argue that being smaller is easier, as you are master of your own destiny and there is little to no scrutiny of your actions. I think the smaller guy has a greater responsibility and that we can all benefit from the support of a team, similar to a multi-crew cockpit workload, which is much easier compared to a single pilot workload where the outcome of all decisions originate from one individual.

Recently our industry has experienced a quantum leap in insurance premiums for more than one reason, with the main insurers citing, for example, international trends and loss ratios in the single and multi-engine turbine sector being too high, thereby driving some insurers out of the market and depriving the industry of competition.

This is an indicator that our industry "bundle", as mentioned above, needs a tweak; and the outcomes from our decisions are threatening the safety culture and fiscal viability of the industry.

The decisions we make are core to a successful industry; good decision making at all levels will lead to good outcomes in terms of safety, loss reductions and greater confidence from the insurers and the public in general.

Our helicopter industry provides the communities of Australia with a broad range of services and we need the greater communities' support and respect if we wish to continue to operate safely and successfully.

Safe flying,

Ray Cronin

President



## CEO'S COMMENT

If 2020 was Australia's social and economic survival year, 2021 must be a year to begin the recovery.

The helicopter industry is experiencing similar fortunes, with fire-fighting resources stretched to the limit in the summer of 2019/20, then a once in a century pandemic during which the industry was still providing many essential services.

In 2021 the challenges and opportunities remain, albeit in a slightly more positive economic environment.

On the CASA front, it is disappointing that the agreed changes to the currently complex and draconian multi-engine rating remain mired in red-tape.

The urgently needed modernisation of the Flight Examiner rating is also proceeding far too slowly. We need more industry-trained Flight Examiners now, not in five years.

Both these issues are a serious hand-brake on the whole industry and the AHIA will not rest until they are resolved. They remain our highest priorities.

It is not helping matters that it is taking so long to appoint a new CASA CEO/DAS. This has been a six-month process so far, and at the time of writing no announcement has been made.

With so many priority issues yet to be resolved, it is imperative that the

government soon informs the industry of its new regulatory leader.

On a more positive note, planning is well advanced for RotorTech, to be held in Brisbane 15-17 June 2021. There is a dedicated website at [www.rotortech.com.au](http://www.rotortech.com.au) outlining the excellent conference program. I encourage everyone to read it in detail.

Rotortech is free of charge to all industry participants. Given it will be three years since we gathered as an industry, let's make a special effort to get there. The helicopter and rotary industry is a future-leaning part of aviation, and many new products will be on display. This is a great opportunity to showcase our industry to the wider community, as well as attract new participants. We must never lose sight that we are competing for the best and brightest of our youth. We need to be welcoming and offering the type of careers the next generation is seeking.

Planning is also well advanced for RotorTalk to be held in conjunction with the major Avalon Airshow in November 2021. Watch this column and the website for updated information as the event draws nearer.

I want to mention again that the AHIA Board is entirely voluntary, but particularly hard-working. Hopefully you will have a chance to meet them all at RotorTech.

Before that, if you wish to raise any issue don't hesitate to write to me at [ceo@austhia.com](mailto:ceo@austhia.com), or call on 0438 114 372.

The AHIA only exists to serve its members and your views are very important to the direction taken by your Association.

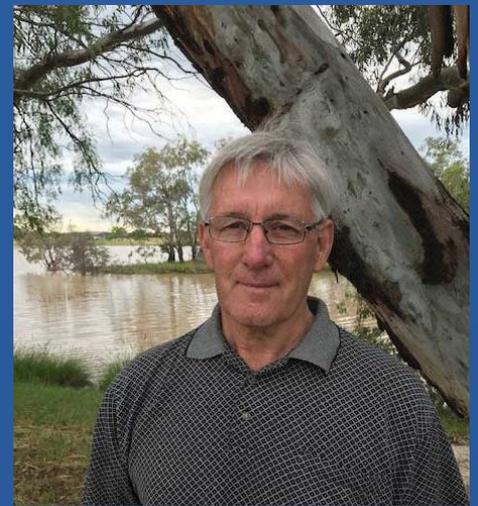
There is no doubt that the AHIA is gaining strength and remains a serious aviation industry interlocutor with government, at all levels.

Every new member further strengthens our national voice and reach, so please encourage every industry participant to join the AHIA.

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible at RotorTech.

Paul Tyrrell  
CEO

Australian Helicopter Industry Association



## By Alan Bailey, CEO Heliwest Group

The COVID crisis has more effect than ever before and managed to split the nation geographically with the many border restrictions that have been imposed.

Western Australia has been very fortunate, partly by design and probably more by virtue of its isolation that we've managed to keep the dreaded virus at bay.

Even so, aviation providers of all sizes have been hard hit by the reduction in international tourism, and particularly early on, by the immediate stoppage of flight schools, mining exploration and heritage surveys, short charters and drastic changes to Fly-In-Fly-Out (FIFO) workers in the aviation world.

Here at Jandakot airport, we saw the sad demise of China Southern flying school, with the loss of many instructor and operational jobs, plus the curtailing of flight studies for dozens of students.

Fortunately, the boom in internal tourism has seen a resurgence in interest in helicopter charter and flight school enquiries, perhaps with students taking the opportunity to spend money earmarked for overseas travel on a PPL or CPL instead!

Advanced training is also a growth area, with interest in Night Vision Imaging Systems (NVIS), Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) and low-level flying courses coming from a wide range of customers.

The WA resources industry acted very quickly and decisively to enact measures above and beyond those imposed by the WA government, which meant that after a brief lull in Q1 and Q2 of 2020, production has ramped up again markedly; and of course, massive demand for iron ore has helped! We are now back to normal, servicing exploration and heritage survey work across the Pilbara and Goldfields, as are our colleagues in helicopter charter.

Emergency Medical Service operations in WA have had to find new ways to ensure sterile cabins and protect the pilots from potential COVID patients. It's been pleasing to see the collaboration between OSH and Engineering that has led to a rapid take up of new, safe solutions.

Qualified and experienced Engineering staff remain hard to find, and we are currently hiring apprentices to grow our pool of engineering talent.

This is a theme I am hearing time and again, and given that R22, R44 and AS350 platforms are in high demand, there is a real shortage of Robinson engineers in the state at present.

Helicopter Spare parts have been adversely affected, with long lead times for spare parts from some manufacturers and freight costs going through the roof. We have seen some quotes for air freight close to triple in the space of two weeks, as limited flights and demand for space jack up the rates. This makes quoting customer work doubly difficult and expensive.

Industry contacts report that many machines that were previously parked up over the past year are now starting to get their long-awaited makeovers, and buyer demand for good used aircraft has suddenly ramped. There is a renewed interest in Longranger and Squirrel aircraft with the current enquiry rate the biggest we have experienced in years.

Private owners too are either looking to upgrade or making more use of their aircraft. We have quite a few private owners of helicopters in WA using their helicopters for weekend runs down to the South West wineries and beaches. And with some of the finest coastal scenery in Australia, why not!

Sadly this summer has seen the return of bushfires to the west, and firefighting operations, both fixed-wing and rotary, have been very busy through January and February. By contrast, the north of the state has been inundated with rain from a series of slow-moving low-pressure systems that brought flooding to the Pilbara and Gascoyne regions. This will be great for the farmers in the long term who are coming out of a long drought, but for now has brought work to helicopter operators with Search and Rescue (SAR), equipment and personnel transfer, and lots of road survey work.

I think all helicopter operators in WA are looking forward to a busy year across the range of services that are so vital to the state; tourism, SAR, Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS), mining support, fire ops, and flight training.

For us personally, at Heliwest, we hope to have our Perth City floating Helipads up and running near Elizabeth Quay in the CBD later in the year, along with fleet improvements and looking after our diverse customer base.

With 2020 now just a bad memory, we look forward to what 2021 has in store, and we are very optimistic about the future.

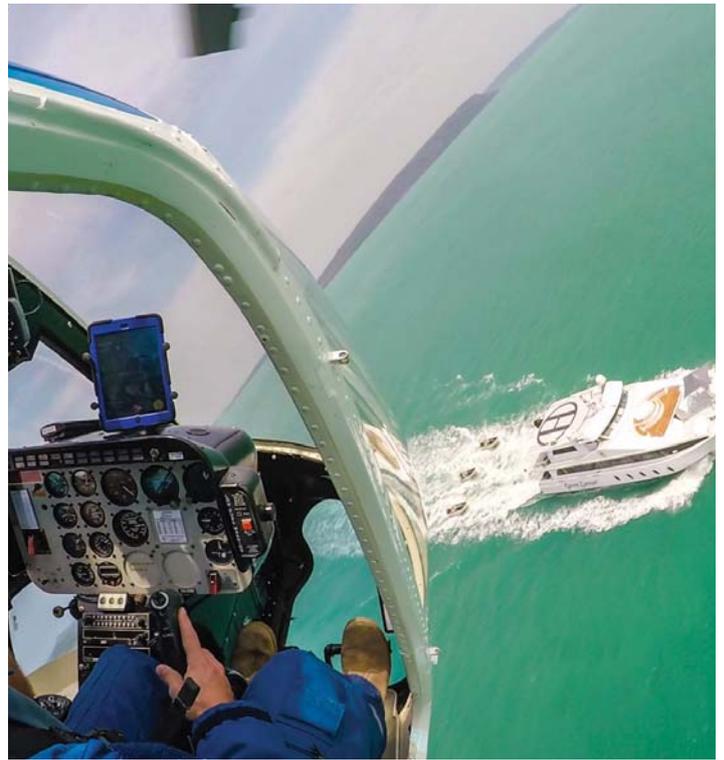


## HELICOPTERS AT WORK

Heliwest Group CEO Alan Bailey shares a collection of images of Heliwest helicopters about their business in a variety of roles, from the Pilbara to the Antarctic.

*All images courtesy Heliwest.*

If you have images of your helicopters at work, we would love to share them with fellow AHIA members through these pages. Send images to [info@austhia.com](mailto:info@austhia.com).





## AUSTRALIAN HELICOPTER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION ROTORTECH CONFERENCE

**“Be There - Make a Difference”**

Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane, Australia

### ROTORTECH - Be There, Make A Difference.

With input from the AHIA membership and wider Australian helicopter industry, the AHIA ROTORTECH Conference (Brisbane, 15-17 June) will address current and future issues confronting helicopter operators in Australia and the Indo-Asia-Pacific region in this complimentary program: Be There – Make A Difference.

The complimentary conference, to run as part of ROTORTECH, presents a unique opportunity to hear from a wide range of invited presenters who are acknowledged experts in their sphere of rotary-wing activity.

Speakers will share their expert views and observations with conference delegates on topics including:

- The future of the rotary-wing regulatory landscape
- Stories from the Heli-mustering front
- Observations on the current helicopter safety climate in Australia
- Aerial Fire-fighting lessons learnt
- Financial advice on leasing versus purchasing and practical insurance help
- Rotary Wing Tourism – The Bird’s Eye View

Due to popular demand, the Major Helicopter Manufacturers Technical Workshops will again return to the ROTORTECH AHIA Conference program. First introduced in 2018, these popular workshop sessions, hosted by major manufacturers, are an innovative and integral part of the ROTORTECH program.

Workshops are open to all registered visitors and are structured by the manufacturer themselves to provide an information sharing platform specific to their product line. Previously hosted by Airbus Group, Bell and Robinson Helicopter Company – more information on the content of each session will be available closer to the event.

After two postponements through the COVID pandemic, ROTORTECH is shaping up as the helicopter industry’s first real opportunity in three years to get together. Industry is enthusiastic – the static park is now booked out with 14 helicopters, and there will be more than 100 participating exhibitor companies.

For more information and to register, go to [www.rotortech.com.au](http://www.rotortech.com.au).



### PRIVACY STATEMENT

The Australian Helicopter Industry Association is committed to its obligations under the Australian Privacy Principles.

For more information: <https://www.austhia.com/privacy>

### AHIA CONTACT INFORMATION

Australian Helicopter Industry Association

PO Box 58 Lyndoch South Australia 5351

Telephone: +61 (0) 438 114 372

Email: [info@austhia.com](mailto:info@austhia.com)

Web: [www.austhia.com](http://www.austhia.com)