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ALPHA RECEIVES TYPE CERTIFICATE AND ANNOUNCES EXPANSION PLANS

New Zealand's newest aircraft manufacturer, Alpha Aviation, is celebrating the final step in its developmental phase. The New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has presented the company's flagship aircraft - the Alpha 160A - with its Type Certificate and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has reissued the Type Certificate in the name of Alpha Aviation.

Alpha Aviation Managing Director, Richard Sealy is pleased with these latest developments, saying that the issue of the Alpha 160A's CAA Type Certificate and reissue of the EASA version is hugely significant for Alpha Aviation.

"The impact of type certification cannot be understated: it is the culmination of months of hard work by a dedicated team. It is very pleasing that the Kiwi-manufactured Alpha 2000 series is now officially recognised and production at our facility can move up another gear," he says.

With type certification now in place, Mr Sealy also announced a major expansion of the Alpha Aviation facility at Hamilton International Airport.

"It gives me great pleasure to advise that our shareholders have approved a NZ\$3 million expansion of the existing Alpha Aviation facility to enable us to scale up production to eight aircraft per month by next year," he says.

The expansion will see the existing Ingram Road building increased in size by approximately 30 per cent. Council and airport authority approvals are currently being sought and once gained, construction will begin almost immediately. Alpha Aviation will also manufacture further tooling and jigs to meet the increased demands and in early 2007, will substantially increase staffing levels.

"The existing facility was opened in July 2005 by the New Zealand Prime Minister, Helen Clark and despite being capable of assembling up to three to four aircraft each month, it simply won't meet the growing consumer demand for our aircraft. To date, we have 21 confirmed orders. We always believed our biggest challenge would not be selling the aircraft, but producing them in sufficient numbers to meet international demand. It's a nice position to be in, but does cause logistical headaches that can only be resolved by expansion," Mr Sealy says.

The speed with which Alpha Aviation is expanding is testament to what the company has achieved in the tightest of timeframes. It is only 14 months since the company launched, a mere 12 months since the production facility opened and just 10 weeks since the first aircraft - ZK-FXY nicknamed 'Foxy' - came off the production line and took her maiden flight over Hamilton.

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For more information, visit www.alphaaviation.co.nz

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