



Official Release

Rescue Helicopter Celebrates 25 Years with Unison

For immediate release: Thursday 16th October, 2025

Two of Hawke's Bay's vital essential services are marking a 'powerful' partnership milestone this month. Local power lines company, Unison Networks (Unison) has been backing the Lowe Corporation Rescue Helicopter as an Associate Sponsor for 25 years, helping save thousands of Kiwi lives in that time.

A special presentation at the hangar last night officially acknowledged Unison as a core pillar of support for the region's medical air rescue service.

Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust CEO, Andy Quayle says the partnership has stood the test of time.

"25 years of dedicated support is incredibly impressive. It is testament to an organisation's genuine commitment to support a cause aligned with its own purpose, values and principles. There is a lot of respect amongst both parties towards the relationship and what it generates for the wider Hawke's Bay community and its people.

"It's fantastic to be able to celebrate the occasion with Jaun and his wider team. I congratulate them on reaching this milestone and express our gratitude for their 25 years of support."

To celebrate the partnership, Unison will be running a colouring competition through local schools with the top prize – a helicopter ride for the winner and a few friends. Depending on the school, Rotorforce may even pick up or drop off the lucky winner by helicopter.

As a consumer trust-owned company, Unison has supplied electricity to Hawke's Bay for over 100 years. A proud Associate Sponsor of Hawke's Bay's Rescue Helicopter since 2000, Unison's ongoing support has helped make every lifesaving mission possible.

Unison Group Chief Executive, Jaun Park says the partnership is built on shared values and a clear purpose.

"Unison exists to serve our community, and our 25-year partnership with the Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust reflects that commitment. The Rescue Helicopter is there when people need help most, especially in rural areas and for our crews out in the field.

"During Cyclone Gabrielle, we saw first-hand how vital this service is, reaching people in places no one else could. Their work is about care, reliability, and being there when it counts, which strongly reflects the values we share as an organisation, keeping our communities connected and safe."

Base Manager and Pilot, Bill Hartree is under no illusion of just what Unison's loyal level of support means for the service.

"Having Unison backing us for 25 years is massive, not just in terms of financial support, but also what it represents. As a local, essential service themselves, they truly get the importance of reliability, responsiveness, and community connection, all things we value deeply in our work. Their long-standing support shows a real commitment to the people of Hawke's Bay, and we're proud to have them as part of the team that keeps this vital service flying.

"Put simply, without sponsors like Unison, we couldn't do what we do. Each mission comes with significant costs, from keeping the helicopters in top shape to ensuring our crews are ready 24/7. Unison's support helps keep us in the air, where we're needed most, whether it's responding to a farm accident, a car crash, or a medical emergency in a remote area. Their backing gives us the stability to plan, invest in the right gear, and focus on what matters most – saving lives."

ENDS.

Hawke's Bay's Rescue Helicopter conducts around 400 lifesaving missions every year – made possible through essential Government funding combined with the generous support of local communities; grants providers, donors and sponsors like Unison.

If you are an individual, business or large-scale funder wanting to support the region's critical air rescue service, please call (06) 878 1630.

For more information please contact:

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