

Air Chats

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Your family
in the sky
to whanau i te rangi



Safety First

In the aviation business, safety is paramount.

It means planning, training and checking, and when we want to double check our safety procedures we reach out to who we feel is the best in the business:

Patrick Lutz and AEROTHRIVE.

Hunting new angles: Patrick on a cherry picker high above a rare Air Tindi Dash 7 quad prop in the Canadian Arctic.



Patrick, who hails from Germany, has been an aviation enthusiast for most of his life, making it both his professional career and private passion. He served as CEO of the Lufthansa Group's Aviation Quality Services for ten years before taking the helm at AEROTHRIVE, while also running a video channel of some of the weird and wonderful aircraft he has flown over the years. He is now CEO of AEROTHRIVE, which can call on more than 100 air safety experts, and his airclips.com channel has clocked up more than two million views - not bad for a guy who has no family background in aviation.

"I'm not from an aviation family," Patrick says, "but reportedly already at the age of four I was always paralysed when there was an aircraft flying above and, you know, pointing up at it. I never had the idea of becoming a pilot but thought I should become an aviation journalist, then when an aviation company started up in my hometown I started pestering them to give me a job - time after time, to the point that the manager said, 'Okay, if you promise me that you will not enter my office for the next four weeks I will give you a job.' This is how I got into aviation!"



Plane spotting on frozen Great Slave Lake: A Twin Otter on skis pictured in Yellowknife Bay, Canada at around -20 degrees Celsius.



In Palmdale, California, Patrick was invited to witness two NASA missions on a specially modified Boeing 747SP flying observatory with a huge telescope and team of scientists aboard.

His first job was basically shuttling crew around in the wee hours, but he soon moved on to producing the company's inflight magazine. All the while though he really wanted to get into operations, and when a role in safety auditing came up he jumped at the chance - despite not really knowing what the role involved! Fortunately he loved it - and the rest as they say is history. After working his way up he jumped ship for Lufthansa and after ten years there decided to go out on his own.

AEROTHRIVE was founded in 2023, and has gone from strength to strength, quickly growing into a global flight safety-enhancing audit programme primarily focused on large aircraft commercial aviation and working with some of the world's leading airlines.

After the audit, Patrick had a few hours to fill before his return flight to Germany - and how better to spend waiting time for a flight than by flying? Craig Emeny kindly invited Patrick for a scenic helicopter tour around Auckland.

Patrick was still producing content for his airclips.com site though, and it was making a video of Air Chatham's Convair 580 back in 2021 (while still with Lufthansa) that he struck up a conversation with founder Craig Emeny. Fast forward a couple of years and when Air Chathams needed a safety audit, they felt that Patrick's passion, dedication and can-do attitude set his new company apart. For decades, there had been little change to the aviation safety audit industry. For Air Chathams, seeing AEROTHRIVE bring a whole new dynamic, with some extremely talented team members who had decades of experience and the drive to deliver, made the company the perfect fit for the family owned airline who have always liked doing things differently.



CEO handshake: Air Chathams' Duane Emeny and Patrick with happy faces after an intense audit week in Auckland.





Smiles all around from the Air Chathams and AEROTHRIVE teams after completing a successful audit together.

“Working with the team at Air Chathams means it’s all about guaranteeing that the airline not only meets - but exceeds - the industry norms.”

“Patrick and his team brought a strong sense of reassurance to Air Chathams as we expand our operations and prepare to launch our interline partnership with Air New Zealand. Having their independent perspective and expertise reviewing our safety systems provided valuable confidence that we are well-positioned for this important next step” says Duane Emeny, Air Chathams Chief Executive Officer.

“Air Chathams have a great team,” says Patrick. “It’s not just a job for them, it’s like a family, and they take safety very seriously. What AEROTHRIVE offers is another set of eyes, an objective overview of all systems and procedures, and working with the team at Air Chathams means it’s all about guaranteeing that the airline not only meets - but exceeds - the industry norms.”

Not every happy mission turns out to be a success: a lesson learned for Patrick after unintentionally deleting all footage of the Air Chathams Metroliner filming day in the same evening. A couple of drinks followed.

“During a SARP check audit, our team of four highly experienced aviation auditors - drawn from operational disciplines such as flight operations and maintenance - conducts an in-depth assessment of the operator’s processes and their implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). ICAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations that develops SARPs as globally applicable standards and recommendations for aviation safety and operations, which are adopted by states and transposed into national regulatory requirements applicable to airlines.”

AEROTHRIVE’s audit has been critical in allowing Air Chathams to seamlessly integrate with Air New Zealand via Interline. Starting in Whakatāne last December, Air Chathams customers can now book a single ticket for journeys that include both Air Chathams and Air New Zealand flights - which means smoother travel, checked bags transferred all the way to your final destination, and less hassle along the way.

“Working with Patrick and AEROTHRIVE has been great,” says. “The Interline agreement is a big win for regional New Zealand, helping locals stay connected for business, education, health, and time with whānau – and it opens the door for more visitors to discover everything the Eastern Bay of Plenty region has to offer. And knowing that our safety procedures are up there with the best means a lot to all of us at Air Chathams - our customers are like family and we want to take good care of them.”



Preserving classic aviation operations for future generations in high quality is Patrick’s main driver for filming. Consequently, his ride on Air Chat’s classic Convair 580 back in the days was his dream come true.

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