

Huey's for Africa:

An 'Enspiring' Story

THE UBIQUITOUS AND ICONIC VIETNAM HELICOPTER, THE HUEY, HAS HAD A CHEQUERED HISTORY IN SOUTH AFRICAN OPERATIONS. A NEW COMPANY HAS EMERGED WHICH WILL REGULARISE HUEY OPERATIONS AND GIVE THEM THE CREDIBILITY AND RECOGNITION THAT HAS BEEN MISSING FROM SOME EARLIER CAPE BASED OPERATIONS.

The Garlick Huey

The Huey is the probably the ultimate helicopter for Third World operations. It is tough, tried and tested and has been described as, "The Land Cruiser of helicopters." Because it was so widely produced for its military role there is no shortage of spares and the Lycoming engines are readily re-buildable.

In response to market demand for the Huey's capabilities Bell produced versions certified for the civilian market, the Bell 204 and bigger 205. However there is a huge premium to pay for civilian certification, with a twenty to thirty year old 205-A1 costing US\$2 million upwards.

Typical Third World operations do not require the full civilian certification. An original Huey with a restricted type certification is a far more appropriate solution. This is where Garlick helicopters spotted the gap in the market.

Garlick Helicopter Incorporated (GHI) was started by the flamboyant and controversial Ron Garlick. GHI started as an FAA Certified Repair Station specialising in the retrofit, overhaul, repair and full restoration of Bell Helicopters. It was the first FAA Repair station to build and operate an approved Lycoming T53 series test cell. Ron Garlick started the company in Concord, California in 1972. After being successfully developed, it moved to Hamilton, Montana.

In December 2003 Garlick Helicopters was purchased by its employees through an Employee Stock Ownership Program.

GHI currently holds FAA Type Certificates for the UH-1B, UH-1E, UH-1F, UH-1P, UH-1L, UH-1H, AH-1 and OH-58 helicopters. Many of their Type Certificates are accepted worldwide, including Spain, Portugal, Argentina, New Zealand, Australia and Chile. After Garlick withdrew from the business it became the Rotorcraft Service Centre in Montana.

Garlick and now Rotorcraft Service Centre

have brought the Huey into mainstream use and have continued to develop the product. Thus Garlick developed and then obtained a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) for a new tail-boom which provides 25% better altitude performance.

This is particularly useful for the heavy-duty roles required of the Huey, particularly as regards fire-fighting and external cargo slinging. It has wide application in disaster management, plus roles in general agriculture, forestry and wildlife operations. In broad terms operators refer to the four 'Fs' of disaster as being; Fire, Flood, Famine and Fascists.

Enspire Aviation

A South African company, Enspire Aviation, recognised the potential for a legitimate Huey operation for these roles.

Enspire was formed after Johan de Villiers completed his helicopter licence in Cape Town in 2007. After the heli bug bit, he teamed up with three friends, Gary Hunt and Gary Fox in Cape Town and Paul Moses in Johannesburg, to create Enspire Aviation. Johan, Gary and Paul are all self-made, ex-IT industry executives who decided to leave the world of corporate drones and start something altogether more exciting.

Notwithstanding some urban legends, the name "Enspire" is an interesting story. The name is derived from a number of sources: Paul and Johan originally owned the IT company "Enterprise Connection" and are both viewed as 'entrepreneurial' thinkers, who believe that "inspiring" your customers and staff ultimately leads to success. Around that time Johan also climbed Kilimanjaro via the notorious Umbwe route. Later, during a brand strategy workshop, the combination of "enterprise", "inspiring", "entrepreneurial" and "spire" (in mountain peak), led to the adoption of the name "Enspire".

To begin operations they acquired two Garlick

helicopters, which have been registered by the CAA as ZS-HBU and ZS-HBV, without resorting to the compromise of using Part 96 and ZU registrations.

Ultimately Enspire plan to become helicopter wholesalers, specialising in the UH-1 Huey and OH-58 Kiowa Jetranger (see Boxes). Enspire first acquired the agency for Africa from Rotorcraft and then went through the rigour of obtaining Type Approval of the Garlick Helicopter from the South African CAA. This required sending a CAA inspector to Rotorcraft Service Centre in Montana in the United States for the necessary factory visit. It culminated in the type's restricted approval to operate in the desired roles on the all important ZS register and not the ZU Non-Type Certified register. All the aircraft they import come with an Export Certificate of Airworthiness.

Compared the cost of a new helicopter, particularly the Bell 407 and 212, the Garlick Huey represents excellent value, typically costing only \$800 000 with mid-life components.

Enspire will deliver aircraft with the avionics suite made to order. There is a twelve week delivery period from date of order to landing in South Africa.

Enspire claims that the Garlick helicopter out-performs the Puma. Although it has a smaller cabin it can still accommodate 14 pax for transfer to its application. Ultimately Enspire plan to build a 'Disaster Management Airforce' similar to the US role in Iraq. This force will be deployable anywhere in Africa on short notice.

Enspire Aviation Operations

Enspire Aviation is the sole agent for Rotorcraft Service Centre (RSC) in Africa.

RSC is based in the United States. It is an FAA Certified Repair Station specialising in the retrofit, overhaul and repair of the Bell UH-1 series, the OH-58 series, 204, 205 and 206 series helicopters.



RSC offers complete component overhaul services including Non-destructive testing and balancing to meet all certification requirements.

As RSC's African agents, Enspire Aviation offers restricted category type certification for many models of UH-1 helicopters and several models of the OH-58 (Jet Ranger). The majority of aircraft under Enspire's certificates are used for utility operations. Enspire is the only aviation company in Africa able to offer type certification to owners of Bell 205 (UH-1) and Bell 206 (OH-58) helicopters.

The two UH-1 Garlick helicopters Enspire have imported to date are being used particularly in the fire-fighting role. They are two-crew machines that have intake particle-separators to protect the engines in the high grit environment of fire fighting.

Enspire are basing the two helicopters at Cape Town International Airport and then at their hangars

in Nelspruit for six month's of the year. The primary client is Working on Fire, who don't just provide fire-fighting, but also services such as comprehensive burn programs to improve grazing. In regions such as the Kruger National Park this earns valuable carbon credits.

The company has registered its own Aircraft Maintenance Organisation (AMO 1110) based in Nelspruit and has eight engineers, of which three are US qualified. The aircraft are maintained strictly according to the manufacturer's recommended service intervals, rather than the more usual Africa style of being maintained 'On Condition' which all too often means, 'Until they break.'

Enspire's legitimising of Huey operations in Africa will be of enormous benefit to those looking for access to these tough yet affordable helicopters.

Main Photo: Enspire Aviations two new Garlick Huey's, ZS-HBU and HBV in the hangar at Nelspruit.

Above Left: Arrival in Cape Town harbour, ready for transport to Nelspruit for assembly.

Above Right: Enspire directors, Left to Right, Johan de Villiers, Paul Moses and Gary Hunt.

Bell (OH-58) Kiowa JetRanger

It is simply the most reliable, survivable, supportable, mission capable helicopter for the money. And it has great resale value. The OH-58 claims to have:

- Lowest operating costs in class
- Best safety record in its class
- The best safety record of any helicopter
- Best autorotational characteristics of any helicopter flying today.
- Collective mounted throttle, rupture resistant fuel cells and shoulder harnesses as standard equipment.
- Ease of operation and a robust cabin structure.
- A better value than any other light turbine helicopter.



Bell 205 (UH-1)



The Bell Helicopter Textron UH-1 Iroquois (Huey) has several distinctive characteristics, including its rounded nose, its twin-bladed rotor, and the iconic "whomp whomp" sound it makes in flight. It is a particularly noisy helicopter because, when in forward flight, the tip of the advancing rotor blade breaks the speed of sound, creating a small sonic boom.

The "Huey", is a multipurpose military helicopter, famous for its use in the Vietnam War. The "U" stands for utility, in contrast to attack or cargo helicopters. The UH-1 was developed from 1955 US Army trials with the

Bell Model 204. The initial designation of HU-1 (helicopter utility) led to its nickname, Huey. The nickname became so popular that Bell started putting the Huey name on the anti-torque pedals.

The aircraft was first used by the military in 1959 and went into production in 1962 as the UH-1. The last were produced in 1976 with more than 16,000 made in total, of which about 7,000 saw use during the Vietnam War. In this war 2,202 Huey pilots were killed and approximately 2,500 aircraft were lost, roughly half to combat and the rest to operational accidents.