

Schiebel Camcopter Performs Successful Power Line Inspection



Schiebel, FLIR and Transpower have announced the successful demonstration of the Schiebel CAMCOPTER S-100 Unmanned Aerial System with the integrated FLIR Corona 350 sensor being used to inspect high-voltage power lines and supporting structures. This event marked the first time that this new capability was demonstrated using a UAS.

Transpower, with the support of the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority, hosted a series of demonstrations at the Drury substation in Auckland, New Zealand, where the outstanding combination of the CAMCOPTER S-100 and the FLIR sensor confirmed the system's ability to identify encroaching vegetation and activity associated with underbuilding, corrosion and wear and tear damage on power line conductors as well as 'hot spots' in conductors and connection points.

The system also demonstrated the clear benefits of its rapid response time, and the ability to subsequently use the collected information to quickly prioritise and target maintenance, which are particularly important in the rapid rectification of fault events causing line outages.

The network comprises some 12,000km of transmission lines and 40,000 supporting structures throughout New Zealand and there is a requirement to regularly assess the condition of these lines and structures to ensure continued safety and integrity of the National Grid. By operating in close proximity to the power lines, the S-100 was able to conduct the inspections without infringing existing airspace regulations and clearly demonstrated the value of this new and innovative solution for accomplishing airborne power line inspection.

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