



Airnorth thanks community for its support

23 March 2010

Airnorth has thanked Territorians and the Australian airline community for its support following yesterday's tragic accident which claimed the lives of two of its pilots.

Chief Executive Officer Michael Bridge said the wellbeing of the pilots' families remained his first priority.

"The Airnorth family has been overwhelmed with messages of support from our community," he said.

"The days and weeks ahead will be a difficult time for the pilots' families, friends and colleagues and the support from the community is providing great comfort to them."

Mr Bridge has also paid tribute to his staff, who have pulled together to ensure flights continue for Airnorth's passengers.

"This is a difficult time for our whole team. The way they have rallied together is a tribute to their commitment and support for their colleagues and the Territory community," he said.

Airnorth is assisting with investigations by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau and other authorities.

"There are obviously processes in place to determine the circumstances and cause of this tragedy and it would be inappropriate to speculate about the outcome," Mr Bridge said.

"What I can say is that the training that was being conducted is a mandated element of our recurrent training program for this type of aircraft.

"Airnorth has world's best practice training procedures in place and we are always working to enhance them. Accordingly, when Australia's first EMB 120 simulator came on line mid last year, we immediately began moving through the accreditation process with both the simulator operator and CASA. This is well underway.

"Simulator training allows manoeuvres to be practiced repeatedly and can enhance the training process. A significant amount of Airnorth training is already conducted using flight simulators. Even when Airnorth completes the simulator accreditation process some in-flight training will still be required.

"There is currently no full flight simulation training aid available anywhere in the world for this type of aircraft and as such there will always need to be a component of in-aircraft training.

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