



Eastland Group update **March 2008**

People make the team

There's more than meets the eye to the drive for health and wellbeing at Eastland Group.

Chief executive Matt Todd, who initiated thrice-weekly fitness sessions and subsidised gym memberships for staff, says their company is all about people.

"Getting the right people is critical to Eastland Group and I remain convinced that it is the quality of the people that will differentiate successful companies from the mediocre ones as we move forward."

"That critical balance between work and other aspects of our lives is vital."

The fitness and wellbeing initiatives are done inside work hours.

"We trust people to do their job at Eastland Group. For the most part we don't clock watch, demanding that employees are at work by 8am and don't leave before 5pm," says Matt.

"Rather we expect people to manage their time so the job they are responsible for is done. Too many organisations are guilty of watching the inputs (time) and forgetting to focus on what really matters which is what the organization actually produces – the outputs or work."

He wants his teams to enjoy coming to work and be proud of Eastland Group.

"We want them to become ambassadors

when they are out and about outside of work without even thinking of it," he says.

"The market for talent is now a global one, and the days of an employer putting an advertisement in the paper and selecting the best candidate are long gone," he says. "The process is now a two way one, with the organisation needing to sell itself to the candidates as much as the other way around."


And while Eastland Group has shown itself to be a national market leader already – with its people well respected within their respective fields – it is not sitting on its laurels.

"Promotion from within is important to the organisation," says Matt. "We want to create opportunities for people within the business to grow with it rather than having to look elsewhere for the next career step."



Feeling great in 2008... personal trainer Alan Hogarth (left) takes Eastland Group employees Fiona Dawson, Sandy Hughes and Stuart Armstrong for a morning run. See the full story on page 2.

Matt cites the recent restructure of the group into three sectors – energy, aviation and logistics – which saw Brent Stewart, Gavin Murphy and Andrew Gaddum taking key sector general management roles, along with Ben Gibson taking the role of general manager commercial.

"All of these men were existing employees and the restructuring allowed them to all step up the ladder for more challenging roles." 



Andrew Gaddum



Ben Gibson



Brent Stewart



Gavin Murphy

All part of the plan

It's the kind of plan you hope you never have to put into gear...but one everyone needs to know.

Gisborne Airport manager Murray Bell knows only too well the importance of having well-drilled teams ready to fly into action in the case of a plane crash.

This month he co-ordinated an exercise that saw emergency and rescue services called to a spot just north of the airport after a single engine chartered Cessna Caravan aircraft with 11 people on board, had crashed 600-metres short of the runway.

The 'injuries' covered the whole gambit – from deceased through to dazed and shocked, and everything in between.

The call went out to the fire communications centre in Wellington, who in turn alerted police and ambulance.



A simulated plane crash saw all rescue and emergency services move quickly into action, and they were all monitored closely to highlight any weak areas in the emergency plan.

"We like to run exercises like this every two years to try to assimilate what they may have to face one day," says Murray. "They are useful because it gives emergency workers a chance to hone their skills and prepare for such a scenario."

He was very pleased with the exercise, saying it reinforced parts of their accident plan as being accurate, while questioning other parts.

"That's just what we want – we need to ensure everything does work as it should in case we do have to respond to such a call-out." ➤

Thrice-weekly workouts

Feeling great in 2008 is bringing a whole new meaning to the staff at Eastland Group.

As part of the company's very holistic approach to business, they have a personal trainer come in three times a week to take staff on runs, bike rides, stair climbs and circuit training.

It's all done inside work hours and costs the employee nothing.

One of those making the most of the scheme says while it is still early days, there are plenty of benefits being seen by all.

Executive assistant Fiona Dawson says the fitness initiative has more wide-reaching effects than one would imagine.

"It's a great concept," she says. "Because it is open to anyone within the group, you get to know people on a different level and I find I feel a lot better when I get back to my desk after doing a session."

Those sessions are not for the faint-hearted.

Personal trainer Alan Hogarth has the 10-15 strong group doing as many as 10 circuits on the killer Kaiti Hill staircase, running along the beach between the city's surf clubs, and dropping plenty of ab work and short-burst workouts among circuit training on the old Harvest Cider site overlooking the harbour.

The concept was driven by Eastland Group Matt Todd, who is one of the first to head out for the thrice-weekly sessions.

The group has also bought bikes for staff to use when going on short errands.

"The whole thing works very well and brings the entire team together," says Fiona.

Smokers are cutting back on the cigarettes, with the aim of giving up entirely, people are feeling more toned and management are seeing plenty of positive flow on effects.

"The nice thing is that there is no compulsion for us to make up the time we spend at these sessions, but being aware of this bonus there is plenty of give and take," she says.

"This is a very progressive company to work for, and it stands out because of the extra mile it goes for its staff – the Feel Great in 2008 campaign is a perfect example."

Expect to see the fitness fiends branded in the future – corporate shirts are on order as the people perk up and ask "who's that team?". ⚙️

Berth buy-up

Eastland Port has bought the Inner Harbour Marina Limited from Murray and Graeme Ritchie.

Eastland Group chief executive Matt Todd says the purchase is a valuable addition to the port's holdings. It will be business as usual for the 52 berth-holders. The port previously owned some of the berths within the inner harbour and the purchase amalgamates the management of all the berths in the inner harbour under control of Eastland Port. 🚢

Second scholarship for Ryan

Ryan Ainsworth is already ahead of his game...and that is largely thanks to his Eastland Infrastructure electrical and electronic engineering scholarship.

The 19-year-old Gisborne lad, who is in his second year studying mechatronics engineering at Canterbury University, has just been awarded a second \$5000 scholarship.

And while the money is a huge help, Ryan says the hands-on experience he gets while spending his summer break working for Eastland Network is what is really paying dividends.

"We are just starting to go into the labs at uni now, but because of my work with Eastland Network, I have already experienced all that first hand," he said.

Ryan, who was dux at Gisborne Boys' High School in 2006, says he will complete his four years at Canterbury and will probably continue on and do a masters.

In case you are wondering, mechatronics – the combination of mechanical, electronic and software engineering – is used to create control systems for places like processing plants. The term was coined in 1969 by a Japanese engineer and is sometimes referred to as electromechanical systems or control and automation engineering.

Ryan says he loves the challenge of mechatronics and while it is a difficult subject to study, he is confident that by putting in the hard yards, he will be able to return to Gisborne with degree in hand.



Ryan Ainsworth

"Gisborne's my home. It's where my family is and it is away from the rat-race."

He's not the complete academic either, having represented Poverty Bay in golf, and was recently top junior while representing Gisborne in the South Island Pistol Championships.

Eastland Group chief executive Matt Todd says the engineering scholarships are the perfect way to invest in the future.

"Our philosophy is not to force people to do training – other than any which is a legal requirement – but to encourage them to self improve, and to support them when they undertake additional training and development."

Ryan is the perfect example of encouraging someone with talent to be able to follow his dream – and hopefully work with the local company along the way. ⚙️

Safety first at the port



Congratulations for a job well done. Turihaua tug master Yorgo Atsalis (right), recipient of the inaugural Eastland Group Quarterly Safety Award, with Eastland Group chief executive Matt Todd.

Yorgo Atsalis certainly didn't figure on being the recipient of the inaugural Eastland Group Quarterly Safety Award.

But talk to those who work with the Turihaua tug master and it's no surprise.

He's been running the 22-metre 18-tonne bollard pull Turihaua and 26-metre

28-tonne bollard pull Titirangi for just over a year now but his involvement with the ocean and boats goes way back – you could say it was in his blood.

Yorgo spent 10-years commercial fishing before switching to relieving work on the port's tug boats.

No day is the same.

As health and safety officer for the tugs, it is Yorgo's job to ensure all aspects of personnel safety are considered.

The floating plant team help manoeuvre the large ships that come in to pick up logs, squash and kiwifruit. It's job that has no room for error.

"We have to consider many hazards that are outside of our control," he says. "So we have to react to them as well as have our own safety measures in place for all sorts of scenarios."

His domain is not just the vessels either, Yorgo is also responsible for light machinery that is used on the wharf and in the port's work shop.

The concept of the safety award was an

initiative from Eastland Group's Health and Safety Committee.

"It was put in place to recognize exceptional commitment and performance in improving health and safety within the Eastland Group," said committee chairman Tracey Whyte.

The winner of the inaugural one was not an easy choice.

"We had four outstanding nominees from individuals and businesses from within all our sectors – aviation, energy and logistics."

The committee believed Yorgo to be the outstanding candidate because of his very dedicated contribution to improving safety awareness through initiatives at the port, including the implementation of hazard management systems, audits, reviews and co-ordination of regular port safety meetings.

"Everyone has a responsibility for safety within Eastland Group," says Tracey, "to ensure we all go home safely to our families each and every day." ⚙️

More passengers in and out



A Boeing 737, Dash 8, Convair 580, B 1900D, Cessnas and a host of other aircraft passed through Gisborne Airport over summer

There are more passengers flying in and out of the district than ever before.

Gisborne Airport played host to a raft of rather interesting aircraft over the summer months, including private Learjets, a Cessna Citation, chartered Boeing 737-200, Dash 8-100, Westwind Jet and Convair 580

And while that most definitely captivated the interest of plane buffs all over the

district, more interesting is that there is a steady increase in the total number of passengers flying in and out.

Gisborne Airport manager Murray Bell says last year's figures show an increase of 913 more passengers flying out, up to 63,392, and 752 flying in, up to 64,725, over the previous year.

Slightly down were the total aircraft movements on the previous two years

and there was also a drop in the total scheduled passenger aircraft movements.

"It always creates a bit of a stir when we have something different fly into the airport," says Murray.

He figures that as Gisborne becomes an even more established destination, local plane spotters should be in for more treats from above. 🛩️

Firing on all cylinders

It's been a hectic few months at Flightline's Dunedin facility.

New staff have joined the busy base, with parts and labour sales up right across the board.

Branch manager Ray Hibbs says it has been a particularly busy summer for all parts of the business and they're riding a high into the cooler autumn months.

Clients in the fixed wing tourism businesses and rotary wing agriculture fields have been assisted by their team of 17 engineers, allowing for quick turn rounds, giving them the ability to get on with their work.

"Flightline has for many years been overhauling Continental and Lycoming aircraft engines to factory standards and has developed the Sapphire brand which has gained a reputation for value for money, quality, performance and reliability," says Ray.

It's going to be a demanding year ahead in the rebuild hanger largely due to the reputation the Flightline crew have gained.

"Our ability to grow the business is limited by the New Zealand-wide shortage of skilled and experienced engineers."



It's been a busy summer at Dunedin's Flightline base.

That said, there have been a couple of new additions to the team – Neil Robertson joined Flightline in December as a senior tradesman, with Geoff Officer coming home from across the Tasman to a job as tradesman in January and Mike Pannett continuing with his traineeship. Mark Williams has received his national certificate in aeronautical engineering, level 4, while Kevin Livesey is doing his RR/ Allison 250 turbine rating course in Nelson. 🛩️

The power of one

When Gisborne rattled and rolled through its December earthquake it brought with it all sorts of heroes.

Generally, these weren't people who sought plaudits, rather people who were genuinely concerned about their neighbours, friends, family and even those they didn't know.

The crew at Eastland Network fit that mould.

Within 15 minutes of the earthquake the network duty control operator was in the control room greeting a steady stream of employees and contractors.

General manager – energy, Brent Stewart said it was a heartening thing to see.

“Our people came in so they could help others,” he said. “While they did have jobs to do, they came in without having to be called upon and very selflessly.”

Immediately after the December 20

earthquake, 19,051 of the 20,151 connections lost power, with 14 of the district's 15 zone substations losing power.

But within an hour 65% had been restored, with 95% up and running within an hour and three-quarters. By the early hours of the morning most power was restored.

“The main reason people lost power was due to lines clashing resulting in circuit breaker operations,” says Brent.

As well as the network team, he had up to 30 contractors working tirelessly to get power restored.



The team who makes it happen... (from back left) Tracey Whyte, Tony Leggett, (middle row) Murray Carman, Mishu Chakma, Earl Walker, Sandy Hughes, Tony Hardgrave, Mike Hutton, (front) Linda Broughton, Aroha Arago-Kemp, Christine O'Dwyer, Brent Stewart, Neville Jenkins.

“We're just incredibly grateful to the staff and contractors who put in some long hours at a time when they would probably have rather been with their families. It's not an easy situation to be in for anyone, but the Eastland Network team got out there and did what was needed to get the power back on as quickly as possible. The support from other members of the Eastland Group was also very much appreciated” 🙏

The life of Brian



As a child Brian Sutherland dreamt of flying a plane.

This month the Flightline Aviation aircraft sales manager retires

after nearly 40 years with the company. In that time he has not just learnt to fly, but flown more planes than he cares to count – but it is still his love.

Brian started in September 1968 at the Ardmore base with Rex Aviation – as the company was known then – in the accounting department.

Figures soon bored the would-be pilot and he moved throughout the company, including running the flight training and air charter division, managing the company's engineering facilities, and for the past 15 years in sales of helicopter and aircraft.

He has loved all facets of his work.

“People don't buy a lot of planes in their lives, so it is quite special to be the one delivering a new aircraft to someone,” says Brian. “You are usually handing over the keys to their pride and joy.”

Over the years the company has had several monikers – Dalhoff and King Aviation, Motor Holdings Aviation, and more recently, Flightline.

He remembers with fondness the boom time of the 1970s when there was a lot of importation of aircraft.

When he headed the flight training school and air charter company, he had more than 20 Cessna planes in his command.

“We were running three flights a day to Waiheke Island, and night freight throughout the country.”

They used to have five bases throughout the country, but now there are two – at Ardmore and Dunedin.

And he has seen youngsters who he gave their first break in aviation to, continue on to head up important operations.

“Flying is something else,” says Brian. “It lived up to every expectation I ever had and is not just a fantastic hobby, but a wonderful industry to work in.”

He doesn't like the word retirement, rather he sees it as a chance to do what he wants, when he wants to.

And although he has flown all over the world, it's travel on his mind and more time with his family.

“And I'm looking forward to doing a little more golfing and fishing.”

He's hoping to combine all of those with some of the lifelong friends he has made while working in the aviation industry.

“I treasure the friendships I have made over the years.”

He won't be entirely leaving the business – opting to continue on in a part time manner in aircraft sales.

Big year for Eastland Port

Figures don't lie....and they're all good news at the local port.

Eastland Port is now officially the third busiest log export port in the country with forward projections of a continued rise.

Year end figures to December 2007 show 600,000 tonnes of logs were exported from Eastland Port, putting it 100,000 tonnes behind Marsden in the north, with Tauranga a distant first on 2.3 million.

General manager - logistics Andrew Gaddum says the port has become the key transport node for the region's burgeoning forestry industry.

"Log exports through the port have increased by 90% over the past three years and there is no sign of that letting up. Despite volatile market conditions, we have strong indicators that harvest volumes will continue to increase," he says.

"The current East Coast cut sits at about 1.2 million m³ and that is projected to rise to 2 million over the next six years."

That means added pressure on the existing infrastructure right through the value chain.

"For its part, the port is in the process of reviewing its core assets and determining how these are best developed to meet our customers' needs going forward," says Andrew.

With 2008 well underway, the port has already had reasonable



Right on track...the new road in the Hirini Street Project sweeps around the side of Kaiti Hill.

volumes through, and has had to utilise offsite storage at the airport to accommodate clients and shipping schedules.

"The port is gearing up to meet the increasing volumes with major infrastructure projects such as the Hirini Street extension nearing completion."

And there's positive news on the horizon for the kiwifruit industry with strong indication from the industry that they are keen to increase their exports out of the region via the port.

"It's certainly an exciting time for us all at the port." 

Loving Life in Gisborne



Gisborne's beaches, warm climate and laid back lifestyle have captured the heart of Eastland Group regulatory analyst Henrike Seifert. (left)


The 27-year-old German had planned to spend a few months cruising New Zealand after finishing her master's degree in economics but only made it as far as Gisborne. That was 2005, and now she is happily ensconced in her new East Coast lifestyle juggling a PhD in economics at Auckland University with work, surfing and horse riding.

Her studies take her to Auckland every six weeks to meet with tutors.

As the regulatory analyst in the Eastland Group office, she works mainly for the Eastland Network part of the business, and involves writing submissions to the Electricity Commission, Commerce Commission and the various Ministries.

"I enjoy that every submission addresses a different area of the business operations, making it always interesting and diverse," says Henrike.

But even more so, she loves her new lifestyle and has no plans to return home to Germany in the near future.

"I always dreamt of a life by the sea – now I have that and more with a beautiful life at Wainui Beach with Shane and our two cats Ngeru and Peanut. What more could I ask for?" 

So, what do you think?

We'd love to hear from you. Please send your comments to admin@eastland.co.nz

**Proudly produced by Eastland Group,
172 Carnarvon Street, PO Box 1048,
Gisborne, New Zealand
Tel +64 6 869 0700 Fax +64 6 867 8563**

Written and compiled by Diana Dobson, The Black Balloon