STARSPEED SEES TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN 40 YEARS OF OPERATIONS

News / Business aviation



This year has seen Starspeed operate in its 60thcountry: Something that 40 years ago would have seemed impossible.

When Starspeed started in the VIP helicopter management and charter business in 1978, the privately owned aircraft were mainly small, single-engined helicopters. They were used only in good weather, within a locally defined area of operations, for short hops as an alternative to a car journey.

It was very much an expensive luxury used for pleasure and convenience rather than providing any calculable benefit.

Now the market is very different. The customers, the aircraft and the way in which helicopters are used have all changed beyond recognition.

Starspeed’s fleet is now made up of large twin-engined helicopters, operated for clients who expect worldwide, day-and-night availability. They’re flown with two pilots and to the same safety

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standards as the Owners' Boeing, Gulfstream or Challenger business jets.

This increased capability and reliability of helicopters now means that ownership is often justified in practical and financial terms; because they are an enabler, allowing other assets work beneficially. A helicopter can allow the Owner to own the jet of their choice, rather than just the jet that fits a particular airport, because the helicopter will then make the connecting flight to wherever the Owner actually wishes to go.

The helicopter can also allow the Owner to build and operate a larger Yacht, because the vessel no longer needs to be restricted to ports and destinations that can accommodate larger ships.

In security terms, helicopters are valuable assets that can provide a peace of mind when such concerns are increasingly important in an ever-changing world.

Starspeed regularly sees 2/3rds of its fleet heading off at some point during the year to foreign climes with our operations team organising engineering, maintenance and re-fuelling via a network of international partners. At certain times of the year we are tracking flights in real-time in up to 9 countries at a time.

And the future of VIP helicopter operations is likely to continue this trend of change, with improvements in reliability, operational availability and capability. The introduction of 4thGeneration will bring automated technology with enhanced navigation aids and vastly improved engine performance.

It is a truly exciting time to be in the helicopter industry, and an exciting time for Starspeed, which is at the leading edge of these changes.

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