

**Media Release**

Kaikohe 8<sup>th</sup> April 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Chopper rides for lucky donors**

A group of lucky Northlanders were treated to free rides in the Electricity Rescue Helicopter last Sunday.

The 20 free rides were offered in an incentive prize draw for donors supporting the Electricity Rescue Helicopter Appeal late last year. Northlanders who registered donations of \$20 or more went into the draw to win one of three prizes of free power worth \$1,000, while donors of \$5 or more could win one of twenty rides in the Electricity Helicopter.

Jointly promoted by official sponsors Top Energy and Northpower, the Appeal raised over \$151,000 in public donations, in support of the Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST) which operates the helicopter rescue service. The funds go towards standing costs of operating the helicopter service, including pilot's wages, flight crew training, Insurance and interest on loans.

The Bolkow German 105 machine was flown up from its Whangarei base to the Bay of Islands Aero club, Kerikeri, especially for the occasion, although it remained on standby during the morning in case an emergency mission was logged.

Chief helicopter pilot, Peter Turnbull said that it was an opportunity for members of the public who supported the helicopter service to get up close and personal with the helicopter and it was a great way to thank them for their generosity. END

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Some of the Helicopter prizewinners: L) to R): Pilot Nicky Ross, Geoff Guy, Noeline Matthews, Peter Timperly, Kay Barratt.

