

## Aircraft Airworthiness and Sustainment Conference



The NANDTB participated in the Aircraft Airworthiness and Sustainment Conference in Brisbane in late July. The meeting brought together a wide cross section of the Australian aerospace industry both military and civil. The theme was ageing aircraft and how to ensure the ongoing airworthiness of older aircraft, which are expected to remain in service for years to come. Some of these aircraft were manufactured well before comprehensive structural inspection programs were initiated. This means that effective maintenance inspection programs beyond

the current Schedule 5 maintenance standards will be needed.

CASA had a strong presence and featured in the list of presenters. The presentation from the NANDTB was aimed at operators and maintainers of older aircraft who need to seek NDT services as part of their maintenance program. It gave a realistic portrayal of the capabilities of NDT methods as they may be applied to ageing aircraft. While the main methods were well covered, other newer techniques such as Magneto-Optic Imaging, D-Sight, Phased Array and Thermal Wave Imaging were also described in relation to their capabilities and cost. The significance of technician qualifications and use of only approved data were emphasised and the Board's web site was promoted as a source of information and doorway to the Board's expertise.

The interest in NDT from the conference was underscored by the number of participants who chose the NDT presentation over two other parallel options. There was in excess of one hundred in the room with some having to stand. The industry involved in maintaining ageing aircraft clearly wants to understand NDT and the regulatory requirements around it, and the Board has a role as a source of that information.

## CASA Ageing Aircraft Seminars

CASA is organising regional awareness and feedback meetings for owners and maintainers of older aircraft under the program "Take a closer look". The first meeting is scheduled for September in Canberra. Wendy McIntosh is the program co-ordinator; wendy.mcintosh@casa.gov.au



The program is targeted at the GA sector to highlight to aircraft operators that they, and not the maintainers, are responsible for the airworthiness of their aircraft. It describes an ageing aircraft management plan. One of the key points is that an aircraft can be fully maintained in accordance with Schedule 5, with all its requirements addressed, yet still not be airworthy. Cracks, corrosion and wiring degradation are all to be expected over the life of an aircraft, and may be found during regular inspections. The trend borne out of experience however, is that as aircraft age they find new, and more worryingly, unanticipated ways to fail. The seminars offer the opportunity for feed back and to leave participants with some fundamental knowledge of;

- the common effects of ageing i.e. fatigue, corrosion, etc
- the potential consequences of ageing effects i.e. failures etc
- the common causes and likely locations of ageing
- the warning signs and methods of detecting ageing
- methods of preventing and/or mitigating the ageing effects
- where to find more information on the ageing aircraft phenomenon

## NANDTB Web Site Renewal

Progress on the renewed website has been very good and it has been live since mid August. Apart from the contemporary and user-friendly layout, the additional and updated information makes it even more useful for the industry and the Board. The site is now managed directly by the Board and will be regularly updated.



## *Nominations for membership of the NANDTB*

Election of the Board members is due in March 2012. Nominations to join the Board are now open. Nominees are to be proposed by their employer. Self-employed persons may be nominated by their organisation. The election process is described in procedure NA-008 on the website [www.ndtboard.com](http://www.ndtboard.com). Nominations are sought from manufacturers, training organisations, major airlines, regional airlines, maintenance and repair organisations / NDT service providers, GA operators and others with an involvement in Australian Aerospace NDT.

Nominations on company letterhead are to be sent to the NANDTB Secretary, C/- AINDT, PO Box 52, Parkville Vic 3052 before COB 30th September 2011.

