



ISLANDS OF OPPORTUNITY: HELICOPTER CHARTERS IN INDONESIA

News / Business aviation



Civil helicopter chartering is growing across the APAC region, and Indonesia is no exception. Saladin Siregar, Key Account Management for Passenger Air Chartering, APAC at global charter experts Chapman Freeborn, provides in-depth insights on helicopter charters in Indonesia, explaining why they are a good fit for the country and which sectors are driving growth.

A diverse and growing civil helicopter fleet

Fleet growth in civil turbine helicopters in the Asia-Pacific region has been consistent and steady for over a decade. Between 2014 and 2024, it expanded from 3,287 up to 4,131 with a CAGR of 2.3%, according to research by the Asian Sky Group. At 154, Indonesia's civil helicopter fleet represents 3.7% of the region's total and is the largest fleet in Southeast Asia. This should come as little surprise considering the country's unique geography.

Saladin Siregar commented: "Indonesia is vast, and its geography is complex and unique. It is a country of over 17,000 islands, and many locations are extremely remote and difficult to access

due to challenging terrain. Travel difficulties are exacerbated by challenging infrastructure in both urban and rural areas. “In the cities, congestion is a significant issue. And outside urban areas, there are many locations where road or sea connections are impractical. These factors combined create strong demand for point-to-point helicopter transport.”

A range of civil helicopter mission types

Roughly half of all helicopter flights in Indonesia last year were multi-mission, according to the Asian Sky Group’s Helicopter Fleet Report 2024. The remaining 50% of flights were made up of a combination of corporate or private hire, offshore flights, and charters, which accounted for over 15% of all missions. There were also a small number of Emergency Medical Services, Search and Rescue, law enforcement, and training flights.

Sectors driving helicopter charter demand

The expansion of helicopter charters in Indonesia is being driven by a combination of sectors and use cases. First of all, there has been an uptick in usage around major cities and tourist locations. Another sector that makes extensive use of helicopter charters is heavy industry.

Saladin Siregar explained: “VIP and corporate transport via helicopter charter is growing, especially in Jakarta and Bali. In congested cities, helicopters provide faster and more reliable travel, which makes passenger helicopter charters popular with both businesses and tourists. In terms of the business sector, executives and project teams are making use of Chapman Freeborn’s chartering services. There were over 4,600 active mining permits in Indonesia in 2024. And there are thousands of energy facilities and power plants spread across the country, including many small diesel plants and multiple Oil & Gas facilities. Many industrial sectors are expanding. For example, there is an increase in nickel and copper smelters, and in refineries. As you would imagine, these facilities are often located in remote areas. Furthermore, the transportation of mission-critical crew and cargo to these sites is often time sensitive, making helicopter charters the most viable and convenient option. Whether it is tourism, corporate travel, or accessing remote industrial facilities, helicopters provide unmatched access and flexibility. They help executives avoid city congestion and enable teams to mobilize rapidly to remote industrial sites.”

Future outlook

The team at Chapman Freeborn APAC anticipates further development in Indonesia’s helicopter charter market in the near-term and will be on hand to support their customers over this period. With Chapman Freeborn’s strong understanding of Indonesia’s unique aviation landscape and close partnerships with key operators and regulating bodies, the company is well-positioned to meet this growing demand.

Saladin Siregard stated: “We expect industrial growth in the country to continue and infrastructure challenges to persist. Based on this scenario, we expect to see a further increase in passenger and cargo helicopter charter demand over the next 5 years. We are also looking at opportunities to expand passenger air chartering services for the corporate and VIP vertical. We are ready to offer safe, reliable and convenient helicopter charters to serve these customers these segments as demand increases.”

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