



# KESTREL AVIATION CELEBRATES 40 YEARS AS LEADING AERIAL FIREFIGHTING SPECIALIST

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer



**Bell Textron is proud to be celebrating Kestrel Aviation 40th anniversary. As the operator of Australia’s largest Bell medium-twin fleet and the preeminent leader in aerial firefighting, Kestrel Aviation has been proudly protecting Australian communities for four decades, partnering and providing fire and emergency management agencies across the country with world-class service and support.**

Founded in 1985 by Ray Cronin OAM, the wholly Australian- and family-owned business started out as a helicopter pilot training school in suburban Melbourne but has grown into one of the biggest aerial firefighting outfits in Australia and is now based at a purpose-built helicopter airfield in Mangalore, central Victoria, which houses several large hangars, a dedicated operations center for fleet monitoring, a rotorcraft simulator, training facilities, an administration center and a storage warehouse.

The industry veteran, with nearly 50 years of experience and more than 10,000 flight hours under his belt, has led Kestrel Aviation to become a critical player in combating Australia’s bushfires. The company’s expertise and advanced fleet have been instrumental in providing rapid response and

effective firefighting capabilities, significantly reducing the impact of bushfires on communities and the environment.

Kestrel Aviation currently operates an extensive fleet of Bell aircraft, including the Bell 206L3, Bell 407, Bell 212s, and Bell 412s. These aircraft are equipped with the latest technology and are maintained to the highest standards, ensuring they are always ready to respond to emergencies. The fleet's versatility and reliability make it an essential asset in aerial firefighting operations, capable of tackling fires in diverse and challenging terrains.

As Bell celebrates this milestone with Kestrel Aviation, the company remains committed to innovation and excellence in aerial firefighting. With a focus on continuous improvement and investment in new technologies, Kestrel Aviation is well-positioned to meet the evolving challenges of fire management and continue its legacy of protecting Australian communities for many years to come.

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