

CHC Group Ltd.
Form 10-K
July 10, 2014

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20549

FORM 10-K

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF
1934
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 2014
OR

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT
OF 1934

For the transition period from _____ to _____
Commission file number: 001-36261

CHC Group Ltd.
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Cayman Islands
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)
190 Elgin Avenue
George Town
Grand Cayman, KY1-9005
Cayman Islands
(Address of principal executive offices, including zip code)
(604) 276-7500
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

98-0587405
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Class	Name of Each Exchange on Which Registered
Ordinary Shares, par value \$0.0001	New York Stock Exchange

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None.

Indicate by check mark if the Registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the Registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

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Indicate by check mark whether the registrant: (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of the registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer", "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer
Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Smaller reporting company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Exchange Act Rule 12b-2). Yes No

As of October 31, 2013, the last business day of the Registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter, the registrant's ordinary shares were not listed on any exchange or over-the-counter market. The Registrant's ordinary shares began trading on the New York Stock Exchange on January 17, 2014.

There were 80,519,484 ordinary shares of the registrant issued and outstanding as of July 8, 2014.

DOCUMENT INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE.

Portions of the definitive Proxy Statement for the Registrant's 2014 Annual General Meeting of Shareholders are incorporated by reference in Part III of this Annual Report on Form 10-K to the extent stated herein. The Proxy Statement will be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Regulation 14A not later than 120 days of the Registrant's fiscal year ended April 30, 2014.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON FORM 10-K
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED
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CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS AND OTHER INDUSTRY AND MARKET DATA

This Annual Report on Form 10-K and the documents incorporated herein by reference contain forward-looking statements, within the meaning of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, about our future expectations, plans or prospects and our business. All statements contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, other than statements of historical fact, regarding our strategy, future operations, financial position, estimated revenues and losses, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management, are forward-looking statements. In some cases you can identify these statements by forward-looking words such as “believe,” “may,” “will,” “estimate,” “continue,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “could,” “would,” “prospectively,” “expect” or the negative or plural of these words or similar expressions. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements concerning the following:

- our level of indebtedness and obligations under our operating leases;
- competition in the markets we serve;
- loss of any of our large, long-term support contracts;
- inherent risks in operating helicopters;
- failure to mitigate losses through a robust safety management and insurance coverage program or to maintain standards of acceptable safety performance;
- risks associated with our fixed operating expenses and long-term contracts;
- our reliance on a small number of helicopter manufacturers;
- limited number of suppliers and availability of replacement helicopter parts and subcontracted services;
- inability to fund our working capital requirements;
- reliance on the secondary used helicopter market to dispose of older helicopters;
- extensive regulation;
 - potential for conflict with the other owners of non-wholly-owned variable interest entities;
- political and economic uncertainty;
 - compliance risks associated with international activities;
- application of tax laws in various jurisdictions;
- foreign currency exposure and related hedging activities;
 - exposure to credit risks;
- allocation of risk between our customers and us;
- dependence on the oil and gas industry, and particular markets within that industry;
- reduction or cancellation of services for government agencies;
- inability to upgrade our technology;
- reliance on information technology;
- assimilation of acquisitions and the impact of any future material acquisitions;
- loss of key personnel;
- labor problems;
- insufficient assets in our defined benefit pension plan;
- adverse results of legal proceedings;
- potential adverse U.S. federal income tax consequences;
- our financial sponsor’s control over us, and its interests that may conflict with ours and may differ from those of our public shareholders;
- future sales of our ordinary shares by current shareholders;

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lack of a prior trading market for our ordinary shares;
our holding company structure; and
the costs of being a public company, including Sarbanes-Oxley Act compliance.

We caution you that the above list of cautionary statements is not exhaustive and should be considered with the risks described under “Risk Factors” and elsewhere in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual outcomes may vary materially from those indicated. We disclaim any intentions or obligations to update or revise any forward-looking information, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except in accordance with applicable securities laws.

The market data and other statistical information (such as the size of certain markets and our position and the position of our competitors within these markets, oil and gas production and market information) used throughout this Annual Report on Form 10-K are based on independent industry publications, government publications, reports by market research firms or other published independent sources. Some market data and statistical information are also based on our good faith estimates, which are derived from our review of internal surveys, as well as the independent sources listed above. This information may prove to be inaccurate because of the method by which we obtain some of the data for our estimates or because this information cannot always be verified with complete certainty due to the limits on the availability and reliability of raw data, the voluntary nature of the data gathering process and other limitations and uncertainties. As a result, although we believe these sources are reliable, we have not independently verified the information and cannot guarantee its accuracy and completeness. The industry in which we operate is subject to a high degree of uncertainty and risk due to a variety of factors, including those described in the section entitled “Risk Factors” in Part I, Item 1A of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

Unless the context otherwise requires, references in this Annual Report on Form 10-K to “Company,” “CHC,” “we,” “us” and “our” refer to CHC Group Ltd. and its subsidiaries. Our fiscal year ends on April 30, and we refer to fiscal years based on the end of such period (the fiscal year ended April 30, 2014 is referred to as “fiscal 2014”). Certain operational terms used in this Annual Report on Form 10-K are defined under the heading “Glossary.”

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TRADEMARKS

CHC Helicopter and the CHC Helicopter logo are trademarks of CHC Capital (Barbados) Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of CHC Group Ltd. All other trademarks and service marks appearing in this Annual Report on Form 10-K are the property of their respective holders. All rights reserved. The absence of a trademark or service mark or logo from this Annual Report on Form 10-K does not constitute a waiver of trademark or other intellectual property rights of CHC Group Ltd., its subsidiaries, affiliates, licensors or any other persons.

GLOSSARY

Deepwater	Water depths of approximately 4,500 feet to 7,499 feet.
Dry lease	A dry lease is a leasing arrangement whereby an entity provides an aircraft to another operator without insurance, crew, ground staff, supporting equipment or maintenance.
Embedded equity	Embedded equity, an intangible asset, represents the amount by which the estimated market value of a leased helicopter exceeded the leased helicopter purchase option price at September 16, 2008, the acquisition date of the predecessor of our wholly owned subsidiary by First Reserve Management, L.P. (or First Reserve). Embedded equity is assessed on an ongoing basis for impairment. Impairment, if any, is recognized in the consolidated statements of operations.
EMS	Emergency medical services.
Heavy helicopter	A category of twin-engine helicopters that requires two pilots, can accommodate 16 to 26 passengers and can operate under instrument flight rules, which allow daytime and nighttime flying in a variety of weather conditions. The greater passenger capacity, larger cabin, longer flight range, and ability to operate in adverse weather conditions make heavy helicopters more suitable than single engine helicopters for offshore support. Heavy helicopters are generally utilized to support the oil and gas sector, construction and forestry industries and SAR and EMS customer requirements.
Average HE count	Our heavy and medium helicopters, including owned and leased, are weighted at 100% and 50%, respectively, to arrive at a single HE count, excluding helicopters that are expected to be retired from the fleet. The average HE count for a period is calculated using a weighted average of the HE count for the beginning and end of each quarter included in that period.
HE Rate	The Heavy Equivalent Rate, or the HE Rate, is the third-party operating revenue from the Helicopter Services segment (excluding reimbursable revenue) divided by a weighted average factor corresponding to the number of heavy and medium helicopters in our fleet.
Long-term contracts	Contracts of three years or longer in duration.
Medium helicopter	A category of twin-engine helicopters that generally requires two pilots, can accommodate eight to 15 passengers and can operate under instrument flight rules, which allow daytime and nighttime flying in a variety of weather conditions. The greater passenger capacity, longer flight range, and ability to operate in adverse weather conditions make medium helicopters more suitable than single engine helicopters for offshore support. Medium helicopters are generally utilized to support the oil and gas sector, construction and forestry industries and SAR and EMS customer bases in certain jurisdictions. Medium helicopters can also be used to support the utility and mining sectors, as well as certain parts of the construction and forestry industries, where

transporting a smaller number of passengers or carrying light loads over shorter distances is required.

MRO Maintenance, repair and overhaul.

New technology When used herein to classify our helicopters, a category of higher-value, recently produced, more sophisticated and more comfortable helicopters, including Airbus Helicopters (formerly Eurocopter) EC225, EC135, EC145 and EC155; AgustaWestland's AW139; and Sikorsky's S76C+, S76C++ and S92A.

OEM Original equipment manufacturer.

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PBH	Power-by-the-hour. A program where a helicopter operator pays a fee per flight hour to an MRO provider as compensation for repair and overhaul components required in order for the helicopter to maintain an airworthy condition.
Rotables	Helicopter parts that can be repaired and reused such that they typically have an expected life approximately equal to the helicopters they support.
SAR	Search and rescue.
Ultra-deepwater	Water depths of approximately 7,500 feet or more.

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PART I

Item 1. Business

Overview

We are the world's largest commercial operator of helicopters based on revenue of \$1.8 billion in fiscal 2014. We are also the world's largest commercial operator of heavy and medium helicopters based on our fleet of 236 heavy and medium helicopters as of April 30, 2014. With bases on six continents, we are one of only two global commercial helicopter service providers to the offshore oil and gas industry. Our mission is to provide the highest level of service in the industry, which we believe will enable our customers to go further, do more and come home safely. With over 60 years of experience providing helicopter services, we believe our brand and reputation have become associated with safe and reliable transportation and mission-critical logistics solutions. Our fleet of heavy and medium helicopters, global capabilities and reputation for safety position us to capitalize on anticipated increases in ultra-deepwater and deepwater drilling and production spending by our major, national and independent oil and gas company customers.

Our helicopters are primarily used to facilitate large, long-distance crew changes on offshore production facilities and drilling rigs. We also provide SAR and EMS to government agencies. We maintain a presence in most major offshore oil and gas markets through a network of approximately 70 bases with operations in approximately 30 countries, more than any other commercial helicopter service provider in the world. We cover this expansive and diverse geography with a technologically advanced fleet of 236 helicopters and the expertise to serve customers in ultra-deepwater and deepwater locations. To secure and maintain operating certificates in the many jurisdictions in which we provide helicopter services, we must meet stringent and diverse regulatory standards across multiple jurisdictions, and have an established track record in obtaining and maintaining certificates as well as working with regulators and local partners. We generate the majority of our oil and gas customer Helicopter Services revenue from contracts tied to our customers' offshore production operations, which have long-term transportation requirements. A substantial portion of our remaining oil and gas customer Helicopter Services revenue comes from transporting personnel to and from offshore drilling rigs and we believe this capability allows us to take advantage of expansion in the global ultra-deepwater rig fleet. Approximately 73% to 78% of the flying revenue in our Helicopter Services segment was attributable to fixed monthly charges for the fiscal years ended April 30, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

We also provide MRO services through our Heli-One business to both our own Helicopter Services segment and to third-party customers. Our MRO capabilities enable us to perform heavy structural repairs, and maintain, overhaul and test helicopters and helicopter components globally across various helicopter types. We believe our in-house MRO operations through our Heli-One business enable us to manage our supply chain and maintain our fleet more efficiently, thereby increasing the availability of our helicopters and reducing our overall cost of maintenance. In addition, we are the largest provider of these services (excluding OEMs), which allows us to provide our Heli-One customers with comprehensive MRO services across multiple helicopter types and families. Our MRO services include complete maintenance outsourcing solutions, parts sales and distribution, engineering services, design services and logistics support.

Our Market Opportunity

We believe trends in the offshore oil and gas industry will positively affect the market and demand for our helicopter services. As the major, national and independent oil and gas companies seek to replace reserves and grow production, we believe they will continue to explore for, develop and produce oil and gas from deeper waters and at locations that are further offshore, which requires more complex transportation and logistics services. Oil and gas companies are also adopting increasingly complex offshore oilfield services and solutions that require more personnel to operate. Additionally, regulatory bodies are increasing their own oversight functions, and crews are being rotated on and off at periodic intervals. We believe these factors will drive an increase in the number of personnel needing to be transported to and from offshore facilities. Helicopter service is the most efficient and often the only viable or permitted form of transportation in many of these jurisdictions due to the distance from shore of the platforms and environmental conditions offshore, particularly in the North Sea, where a sea-faring vessel may take a substantially longer time to cover the same distance and in significantly less comfortable conditions, with greater logistical risks of transporting

workers from vessel to platform.

We believe that the adoption of more complex services on ultra-deepwater and deepwater installations, increased regulatory oversight of these installations and more frequent rotation of increasingly larger crews at regular intervals will further drive customer demand for heavy and medium helicopters, which comprise all of our fleet. Based on our experience, heavy and medium helicopters are favored by customers with ultra-deepwater and deepwater transportation needs due to their greater range, passenger capacity, comfort, enhanced passenger safety systems and ability to fly under a variety of conditions. In recent years, in our experience, the demand for new commercial medium and heavy helicopters has outpaced their supply, a trend we believe will continue. As a result, we expect the market dynamics for our helicopter services to remain strong.

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Furthermore, we believe that our size and scale afford us greater operational and commercial flexibility when purchasing new helicopters and helicopter parts, allowing us to continue to grow our business in response to market opportunities.

Based on our experience operating in the industry, the market for MRO services is highly fragmented. We believe we are the only independent non-OEM provider of MRO services with a global footprint. Moreover, we believe our status as the largest commercial operator that purchases heavy and medium helicopters has positioned us to obtain licenses from all of the major manufacturers to conduct a full range of MRO services across a wide array of models of helicopters used in our industry. We believe that our geographic reach, combined with the related licenses, offers us a significant opportunity to grow our Heli-One business with our third-party customers. As demand for helicopter services grows in conjunction with growth in ultra-deepwater and deepwater drilling and production, we expect that a corresponding increase in flying hours should lead to greater demand for MRO services.

Our Operations

We conduct operations in approximately 30 countries through a network of approximately 70 bases on six continents, including a global operations center located in Irving, Texas. We believe our global operations center is the first of its kind in our industry, allowing us to centrally coordinate flight schedules, pilot rostering, training, fleet management and maintenance from a single location. Representatives from helicopter manufacturers work on-site at our global operations center alongside our own employees to resolve maintenance issues and return helicopters to service. Our global operations center leverages new information technology systems to promulgate best-in-class practices and procedures throughout our company.

We assist our customers with logistics solutions to manage rotation of their crews, as many of our offshore oil and gas customers are required by law and collective labor agreements to change crews every seven to 14 days. For the fiscal year ended April 30, 2014, we operated approximately 86,000 flights worldwide, carrying in excess of one million passengers. As offshore operators have moved further from shore and become more remote, crews have grown larger and taken on functions that previously relied on shore based support. To accommodate the change out of larger crews, a helicopter would have to make multiple trips or several helicopters would have to be used. Computerized logistics systems in our global operations center help us provide seamless coordination between our regional bases and our customers, matching customer needs with helicopters, engineer and pilot availability which enables efficient crew changes, while maintaining compliance with relevant regulations. We continue to enhance our logistical systems and are implementing a roll-out of our long-term crew planning and scheduling program, our Airline Information Management System, or AIMS, to further improve customer service levels. This system improves crew scheduling, the integration of crew rosters, allows integrated training planning and enhances key performance indicator reporting to improve crew and helicopter productivity. In addition, we have advanced systems in place to monitor and maintain equipment. In the event a helicopter requires unforeseen repairs or replacement of parts, we have the ability to provide immediate support to ground personnel to make a repair as well as a dedicated team available to identify the most efficient manner to source any replacement parts. We believe that our global operations center, combined with our expertise in crew logistics and equipment availability as well as our robust compliance programs, allow us to offer superior and differentiated service to our customers.

Our MRO operations are conducted through our Heli-One business, which provides quality and cost control for maintenance, repair, and overhaul of our own fleet as well as comprehensive outsourced MRO services to third-party customers. We maintain four principal Heli-One centers for our global MRO operations, including Delta, British Columbia (Canada), Fort Collins, Colorado (USA), Rzeszow (Poland) and Stavanger (Norway). We maintain a strategic inventory of spare parts, providing us the ability to respond quickly and efficiently to unplanned maintenance events. We believe our focus on speed and efficiency allows us to provide better service at lower cost. Approximately 28%, 34% and 38% of our third-party Heli-One revenue in the 2012, 2013 and 2014 fiscal years, respectively, was derived from “power by the hour” contracts, where the customer pays a ratable monthly charge, typically based on the number of hours flown, for all scheduled and un-scheduled maintenance.

Safety and Regulatory Compliance

We strive to exceed the stringent safety and performance audit standards set by aviation regulatory bodies and our customers. We have established an in-house flight safety group that is responsible for our compliance with safety

standards within our organization, standardizing base operating procedures, compliance with government regulations and customer requirements, and educating and training our flight crews. Over the five year period ended April 30, 2014, according to our safety records we had a rolling average of 0.38 accidents per 100,000 flight hours, a much lower than average rate reported for civilian twin engine helicopters and an even smaller fraction of the rate reported for offshore helicopter operations generally, per industry reports. We also host a highly regarded annual international safety summit, attended by our customers, manufacturers, competitors and regulators, which is a manifestation of our commitment to safe operations.

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A key to maintaining our strong safety record is having a highly qualified and experienced workforce. Our pilots average in excess of 3,000 flight hours of experience, and many of them carry endorsements to operate more than one type of helicopter. Our mechanics are highly experienced and receive ongoing training from helicopter manufacturers. In addition to safety regulations, most of the countries in which we conduct flying operations have laws, with typically complex requirements, that require commercial operators to hold either or both an operating license and an air operator certificate, or AOC. We believe our track record of safety and experience working with regulators will enhance our ability to obtain needed licenses/certificates as we continue to grow.

Our Fleet

Helicopters are generally classified as light (3 to 7 passengers), medium (8 to 15 passengers) and heavy (16 to 26 passengers). We believe heavy and medium helicopters are favored by our customers and are best suited for crew change transportation services on oil and gas production facilities and drilling rigs due to their greater range, higher passenger capacity, enhanced passenger safety systems and ability to fly under a broader variety of conditions than light helicopters. In addition, heavy and medium helicopters have twin engines and typically two pilots, making them safer for longer flights. As a result, larger helicopters generally command higher pricing and earn higher margins compared to smaller helicopters.

We operate the largest fleet of heavy and medium commercial helicopters serving the offshore oil and gas industry, with 236 helicopters as of April 30, 2014. Our fleet is comprised purely of heavy and medium helicopters, which we believe optimally positions us to respond to opportunities in the high growth ultra-deepwater and deepwater market. Over the last eight years, we have modernized and expanded our fleet significantly, and we continue to invest to meet customer demand for newer heavy and medium helicopters. We have strong longstanding operating relationships with the four major OEMs, Airbus Helicopters, Sikorsky, AgustaWestland and Bell, and have helicopters manufactured by each of them in our fleet. This diversity ensures that we are not overly reliant on any one model or manufacturer, while still giving our fleet critical mass across various helicopter types, resulting in fleet management, maintenance and training efficiencies.

The model life cycle for helicopters spans multiple decades. Individual components, which represent a large majority of a helicopter's value, are frequently replaced to meet regulatory requirements or safety standards. In addition, there is an active secondary market for helicopters supported by independent appraisers and valuation experts.

As of April 30, 2014, our fleet was valued at approximately \$3.0 billion based on the average of 2014 third-party appraisals of fair market value by Ascend Worldwide Group Holdings Limited and HeliValue\$, Inc., consisting of approximately \$2.1 billion of value attributable to heavy helicopters and approximately \$898 million of value attributable to medium helicopters. As of April 30, 2014, the average age of our fleet was 11 years. The Airbus EC225, Sikorsky S92A, AgustaWestland AW139 and Sikorsky S76C++, which have been the core part of our capital investment program in recent years, represent approximately 79% of our total fleet value as of April 30, 2014.

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The table below provides a detailed summary of our fleet as of April 30, 2014:

Helicopter Type	Total	Cruise Speed (kts)	Approximate Range (nmi)	Passenger Capacity	Maximum Weight (lbs)
Heavy: Sikorsky S92A	39				