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How HelpMeSee Are Using Aviation-Inspired Training to Tackle Global Blindness

[Civil Aviation](#) | [Patrick Johnston](#) · 17 March 2025

How Aviation Training is Helping to Cure Blindness – HelpMeSee at WATS 2025



Using the same training innovations that have made aviation one of the safest industries, HelpMeSee is tackling a global health crisis affecting 20 million people worldwide.



Jim Ueltschi, founder, chairman, and treasurer of [HelpMeSee](#)—the WATS 2025 charitable partner—explained how standardised simulation training, which transformed aviation safety, is now being used to combat widespread cataract blindness.

"Our expertise in simulation and standardised training makes this work possible," Ueltschi told Halldale in an exclusive interview.

For aviation professionals attending WATS 2025, HelpMeSee's mission represents a powerful demonstration of how their industry's training methodologies can create profound humanitarian impact beyond aerospace.

[Find Out More About HelpMeSee](#)

The organisation employs high-fidelity simulation with haptic feedback—technology immediately recognisable to pilots—to train practitioners in Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery (MSICS), a five-minute procedure costing just \$25 that can restore sight to those suffering from cataract blindness.

The scale of this challenge is staggering. Developing nations often have fewer than two ophthalmologists per million people, meaning that without intervention, the number of people affected by preventable blindness is projected to double to 40 million by 2040.

HelpMeSee's approach directly mirrors aviation's proven safety and training standardisation model—systematically training local practitioners at scale to create sustainable solutions rather than temporary interventions.

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"I think pilots and aviation training professionals would be fascinated to see how the same technologies they use daily are being applied to address such a significant humanitarian crisis," Ueltschi emphasised.

The organisation's aviation roots run deep. Founded by the son of Flight Safety International's creator, Albert Lee Ueltschi, HelpMeSee has adapted the core principles that revolutionised aviation safety—standardised training, high-fidelity simulation, structured curriculum, and professional instruction—to transform global eye care.

As WATS 2025's charitable partner, HelpMeSee invites the aviation training community to recognise their work as a direct extension of aviation's training excellence and innovation.

"We're honoured to participate in WATS—it's the pinnacle of innovation and technology, and a showcase of training excellence," Ueltschi said. "We're applying these same standardised, objective training methods worldwide to help millions regain their sight—a perfect example of how aviation's training discipline can change lives far beyond the industry itself."

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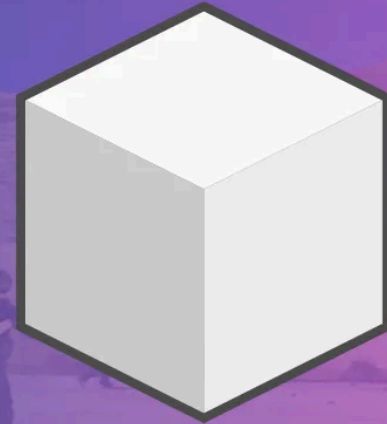
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