

OC250348

21 May 2025



Tēnā koe 

I refer to your email dated 14 April 2025, requesting certain information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I apologise for the late response to your request.

You email requested the following information under the Act:

“All advice provided to the former Minister of Transport, Hon Simeon Brown, the Minister of Transport Hon Chris Bishop and the Associate Minister of Transport Hon James Meager, relating to student loan settings for student pilots, that includes any advice provided on the student loan cap for student pilots.

all advice provided to the above-named Ministers, regarding the cap on the number of EFTS funded student pilots.

I also request all advice provided to the above-named Ministers, on the annual maximum fee movement (AMFM) for student pilots.

information provided to or received from the Ministry of Education over the same period relating to the above matters.”

Five documents, listed in Annex 1, fall within the scope of your request. Of the five documents:

- four documents are being released with some information withheld
- one document has been fully withheld.

Certain information as outlined in the table in Annex 1 is being withheld under the following sections of the OIA.:

- section 9(f)(iv), as the information is still under active consideration
- section 9(2)(a) as they related to contact details

Further information has been withheld where it is out of scope of your request.

With regard to the information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding the information at this time are not outweighed by public interest considerations that would make it desirable to make the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses, and the information contained in our reply to you may be published on the Ministry's website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā



Tom Forster
Manager - Aviation

Annex 1: Title

Doc#	Reference number	Date	Title of Document	Decision on request
1	OC241285	22 November 2024	Meeting with Interim Aviation Council on the National Aviation Policy Statement	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a). Information withheld is out of scope.
2	OC240900	23 August 2024	Aviation Industry Association New Zealand Annual Conference	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a). Information withheld is out of scope.
3	OC231136	28 February 2024	Aviation New Zealand Parliamentary Function – March 2024	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a). Information withheld is out of scope.
4	OC250124	26 February 2025	Progress Towards a National Aviation Policy Statement	This document is being withheld under section 9(f)(iv).
5	N/A	7 October 2024	RE: Aviation workforce	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a).



22 November 2024

OC241285

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport

MEETING WITH INTERIM AVIATION COUNCIL ON THE NATIONAL AVIATION POLICY STATEMENT

Snapshot

You are invited to talk to the Interim Aviation Council (the Council) about the National Aviation Policy Statement (NAPS). The Council seeks your input on whether its aims for the NAPS resonate with you, your priorities for the NAPS, and how to involve you in the process. A good outcome would be aligning the NAPS with broader sector goals, ensuring realistic yet ambitious actions, and gaining comprehensive stakeholder support for a resilient and sustainable aviation future.

Time and date	2:30 – 3:00pm, 27 November 2024
Venue	Ministry of Transport. However, you will be joining the meeting virtually
Attendees	Keith Manch, Civil Aviation Authority Catherine MacGowan, Wisk Aero Mahanga Maru, Air Ruatoria David Morgan, Air New Zealand Darryn Webb, New Zealand Defence Force James Young, Airways New Zealand Cath O'Brien, Board of Airline Representatives Billie Moore, NZ Airports Mary-Liz Tuck, Auckland Airport Simon Wallace, Aviation Industry Association Andrew McKeen, New Zealand Airline Pilots Association Iain Cossar, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (tbc)
Officials attending	Dominic Cowell-Smith, Private Secretary Audrey Sonerson, Secretary for Transport & Chief Executive Siobhan Routledge, Director, Aviation Tom Forster, Manager, Aviation

Natalie Howell, Senior Advisor, Aviation

Isabel Avery, Advisor, Aviation

Talking points

Talking points attached

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Siobhan Routledge, Director, Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Tom Forster, Manager, Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	
Isabel Avery, Advisor, Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	

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**MEETING WITH INTERIM AVIATION COUNCIL ON THE NATIONAL AVIATION
POLICY STATEMENT**

Out of Scope

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Out of Scope

Workforce issues

- 10 The sector is concerned about the shortage of pilots, maintenance engineers, and other skilled people that the sector needs and that our tertiary education settings may not be right.
- 11 The Ministry recently facilitated a workshop between the sector and the Ministry of Education to work through issues. One issue that the workshop highlighted was the gap that existed between a student finishing training and being able to find a suitable job to build up their hours to then be able to work for airlines or other aviation businesses. Further discussions are planned between the sector and the Ministry of Education to work through the issues. Some of these issues can be best addressed by industry.

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)

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Out of Scope

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Annex 1: Talking Points

Out of Scope

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- Workforce shortages are a big concern for the Council. Recruiting and retaining talent is crucial for the sector's future success. You could acknowledge the evidence based work that has been undertaken (led particularly by the Airline Industry Association – Simon Wallace), and the work that the Ministry is facilitating between the Council and the Ministry of Education.

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**EVENT BRIEFING**

23 August 2024

OC240900

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport

AVIATION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE**Snapshot**

You have been invited to attend the Aviation Industry Association New Zealand (AIANZ) conference in Christchurch.

You have agreed to provide a 10 to 15 minute speech at the function highlighting key issues and/or pieces of work on aviation. Following your speech (already provided), there will be a Q&A session of up to 15 minutes.

This briefing provides information to support your attendance and speech at the conference.

Time and date	8:30am - 11:30am, 27 August 2024
Venue	Te Pae Conference Centre in Christchurch
Media	Transport/aviation media may be present
Speaking notes	Questions and answers are attached (Annex 1)

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Siobhan Routledge, Director Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	
Tom Forster, Manager, Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Shereen Faraj, Policy Advisor, Aviation	s 9(2)(a)	

AVIATION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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Pilot Training

- 17 AIANZ has long been advocating for the reduction of barriers to pilot training for New Zealanders, primarily around the student loan funding cap. It is concerned that tertiary borrowing restrictions have resulted in a critical decline in the supply of commercial pilots in New Zealand and made aviation training less accessible and less affordable to certain demographic groups.
- 18 The annual student loan cap of \$35,000, which is the responsibility of the Minister of Tertiary Education, was put in place to limit the size of loans to aviation students.
- 19 You previously engaged with AIANZ on this issue and emphasised the importance of providing robust data and evidence to support the industry's demand for pilots.

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28 February 2024

OC231136

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport**AVIATION NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENTARY FUNCTION – MARCH 2024****Snapshot**

You are attending the Aviation New Zealand Parliamentary function. The event is an opportunity for Aviation New Zealand members to meet with Ministers, officials, and other aviation stakeholders.

You have agreed to provide a short speech at the function highlighting key issues and/or pieces of work on aviation. Following your speech there will be a Q&A session and light refreshments.

Time and date	5:30pm, Tuesday 5 March 2024
Venue	Grand Hall, Parliament Building, Wellington
Attendees	Attendees include aviation stakeholders, Government Ministers and officials from the public sector and Crown entities. Biographies for Ashok Poduval, President and Simon Wallace, Chief Executive of Aviation NZ are attached (Annex 1).
Run sheet	Will be provided nearer to time.
Media	Media have been invited.
Speaking notes	Speech notes are attached (Annex 2).

Bronwyn Turley
Deputy Chief Executive - Regulatory
.28 / 02 / 2024

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport
..... / /

**Minister's office to complete:**☐ Approved☐ Declined☐ Seen by Minister☐ Not seen by Minister

IN CONFIDENCE

☐ Overtaken by events

Comments

Contacts

Name	Telephone	First contact
Bronwyn Turley, Deputy Chief Executive, Regulatory Group	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Tom Forster, Manager, Aviation and Maritime		
Shereen Faraj, Policy Advisor, Aviation and Maritime		

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Pilot Training

- 14 Aviation NZ has long been vocal about the need to reduce barriers to pilot training for New Zealanders, primarily around the student loan funding cap. It is concerned that tertiary borrowing restrictions have resulted in a critical decline in the supply of commercial pilots in New Zealand and made aviation training less accessible and less affordable to certain demographic groups.
- 15 During the COVID-19 pandemic its primary focus was on the closure of New Zealand's borders, and the inability of pilot training schools to enrol new overseas students. The closure of the border led to L3Harris Airline Academy, one of the biggest pilot training schools in New Zealand, closing and consolidating its operations in Europe.
- 16 With borders now open most flight schools are back in operation and taking on international students.
- 17 With the end to the pandemic, it has become evident that the global pilot shortage is more acute than previously. Aviation NZ may resume advocating for the removal of the funding cap, which is the responsibility of the Minister of Tertiary Education.
- 18 The annual student loan cap of \$35,000 was put in place to limit the size of loans to aviation students.

- 19 There are no plans by the Minister of Tertiary Education to alter the student loan borrowing cap at the present time for the following reasons:
- 19.1 Aviation students and graduates still tend to have very large student loans that they are slow to repay. The longer it takes borrowers to repay student loans, the more costly that lending is for the Government.
- 19.2 The slow repayment of student loans is a reflection of the lack of employment opportunities available to aviation graduates, low starting salaries, and their long route to the possibility of a high paying job.
- 20 If this issue is brought up, we suggest you ask for any new information from the aviation sector that would support a better understanding of any demand and supply issues around commercial pilots in New Zealand.

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¹ An aviation document is any licence, permit, certificate, or other document issued under the Civil Aviation Act 1990 to, or about, any person, aircraft, aerodrome, aeronautical product, or aviation-related service.

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s 9(2)(a)

From: Eleonora Sparagna <Eleonora.Sparagna@education.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 7 October 2024 10:26 am
To: Natalie Howell <N.Howell@transport.govt.nz>
Cc: Tom Forster <t.forster@transport.govt.nz>; Carolina Durrant <C.Durrant@transport.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Aviation workforce

Thank you Natalie

I have also received an email request from AirNZ seeking a meeting to discuss the current funding and training models for pilot training in New Zealand, and suggestions for improvements.

let me know if you have been connecting with AirNZ as well and if you think it would be best to meet before or after I meet with them.

This week I am available today between 1-3pm or Thursday morning 9.30-10.30am, let me know if either option works for you.

Ta
E

Eleonora Sparagna | Senior Policy Manager

Te Pou Kaupapahere | Policy

s 9(2)(a)

From: Natalie Howell <N.Howell@transport.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, October 7, 2024 9:52 AM
To: Eleonora Sparagna <Eleonora.Sparagna@education.govt.nz>
Cc: Tom Forster <t.forster@transport.govt.nz>; Carolina Durrant <C.Durrant@transport.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Aviation workforce

You don't often get email from n.howell@transport.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good morning Eleonora

I hope you had a great weekend.

Are you free for a chat with us this week? What days and times would suit you?

Thanks
Natalie

From: Natalie Howell

Sent: Wednesday, October 2, 2024 10:21 AM

To: Eleonora Sparagna <Eleonora.Sparagna@education.govt.nz>

Cc: Tom Forster <t.forster@transport.govt.nz>; Carolina Durrant <C.Durrant@transport.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Aviation workforce

Thanks Eleonora.

Are you free by any chance on Monday at 3.00 or 3.30pm?

A rough agenda might be something like:

- Intros
- Context – background on the Interim Aviation Council
- What they told us, including
 - Shortages of pilots and maintenance engineers
 - Need an industry-wide approach to attracting training, employing personnel
 - Policy settings – e.g. student loan cap
- Ministry of Education history on this issue, and your perspective.

Thanks

Natalie Howell ([she/her](#))

Kaitohutohu Matua - Whakaritenga Ohāoha | Senior Adviser – Aviation

Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport

M: s 9(2)(a)

E: N.Howell@transport.govt.nz | transport.govt.nz

I work full days on Monday, Thursday and Friday, and 9am-1pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.



TE MANATŪ WAKA
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

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From: Eleonora Sparagna <Eleonora.Sparagna@education.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2024 9:07 AM

To: Natalie Howell <N.Howell@transport.govt.nz>

Cc: Tom Forster <t.forster@transport.govt.nz>; Carolina Durrant <C.Durrant@transport.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: Aviation workforce

Thank you Natalie for reaching out

Yes we are aware of some of the concerns and are happy to meet with you to discuss this further if it helps.

Let me know a draft agenda for a catch up and hopefully we can find a few options that work across all our diaries.

Ta

E

Eleonora Sparagna | Senior Policy Manager

Te Pou Kaupapahere | Policy

s 9(2)(a)

From: Natalie Howell <N.Howell@transport.govt.nz>

Sent: Monday, September 30, 2024 2:57 PM

To: Eleonora Sparagna <Eleonora.Sparagna@education.govt.nz>

Cc: Tom Forster <t.forster@transport.govt.nz>; Carolina Durrant <C.Durrant@transport.govt.nz>

Subject: Aviation workforce

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Dear Eleonora

Hope you are having a nice afternoon.

Alasdair Saunders gave me your contact details. (He's my husband.)

I work in the Aviation team here at the Ministry of Transport. Through the Interim Aviation Council, aviation stakeholders have raised issues with us about the aviation workforce, e.g. concerns that not enough pilots are being trained.

We'd like to hear the Ministry of Education's perspective on this issue. May we meet with you to learn more?

Thanks

Natalie Howell ([she/her](#))

Kaitohutohu Matua - Whakaritenga Ohaoa | Senior Adviser – Aviation

Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport

M: s 9(2)(a)

E: N.Howell@transport.govt.nz | transport.govt.nz

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