

AVIATION ACTION PLAN

Interim Aviation Council



Image: Air New Zealand

SEPTEMBER 2025

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Minister's foreword

Aviation is vital to New Zealand's economic prosperity and way of life. We rely on aviation for tourism, trade, conservation, agriculture, horticulture, and emergency response. But it's the role that aviation plays in connecting us to each other, and the world, that truly underscores its importance. It bridges distances and fosters relationships, making our world feel smaller and more connected.

I welcome this *Aviation Action Plan*, which, for the first time, sets out a shared industry and government ambition for an efficient, resilient and innovative aviation sector. I would like to thank the Interim Aviation Council for its leadership and work to drive forward this plan for the future.

The Government is focused on boosting economic growth and productivity and aviation has a significant role to play in achieving that agenda. I want this sector to thrive, to lift prosperity and deliver further benefits for New Zealand businesses and travellers. The Government is securing vulnerable regional routes by supporting regional airlines to access concessionary finance and to enable interlining. In addition, our work to promote tourism, global trade and foreign investment will further contribute to a thriving, productive aviation sector.

The next decade in air transport is poised to be transformative. This will be driven in no small measure by technological advances, sustainability goals and new, more efficient ways of moving people and goods. Drones and uncrewed aircraft, for example, will create new economic opportunities, particularly in sectors like agriculture and forestry, and increasingly change the way passengers and freight move, requiring the sector to innovate and adapt.



I'm excited to see the detailed programme of work and direction outlined in this Aviation Action Plan. This is the foundation for more work and continued ambition. I look forward to the establishment of the permanent Council so we can continue working together to tackle the hard issues facing the sector, while monitoring and implementing this Action Plan and its impact.

From growing the aviation workforce, to driving efficiencies, and supporting sector growth and improved connectivity, the plan of action in this document sets the course to ensure air transport continues to be a pillar of New Zealand's economy and communities, for generations to come.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large loop followed by a horizontal line.

Hon James Meager
Acting Minister of Transport

An ambition to grow and future-proof our aviation sector

The Interim Council is ambitious for aviation in New Zealand

Aviation is critical for New Zealand's productivity and to facilitate economic growth. Our aviation sector supports our tourism and trade industries and provides essential services like disaster and medical support.

We want to build on the sector's existing strengths, while making the most of opportunities offered by innovation and develop new capabilities and technologies. At the same time, we need to address barriers to growth.

How we will achieve our ambition

This Action Plan describes the shorter-term initial actions that will help the Council to achieve its ambitions. It sets out who will lead work on the action – for example, government agencies, industry, or the Council itself. Government-led actions aim to unlock regulatory barriers and address information gaps. Success will rely on different groups working together, including government agencies and the private sector.

Safety and security and international engagement are fundamental to a strong aviation system now and into the future. We must maintain these strong foundations and:

- continue to achieve high standards of safety and security, and
- engage internationally to elevate New Zealand's international reputation and enable economic activity and growth.

To drive the sector forward, we must deliver:

- a world-class, robust, internationally credible, and nimble aviation **regulatory environment** that allows businesses and New Zealanders to thrive
- a workforce with the **talented and skilled people** we need for the sector to grow
- a **thriving, connected, resilient and productive** aviation system that readily adopts innovations
- **well-planned and integrated** aviation system **infrastructure** that supports efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods and enables economic growth.

In addition, the Council wants:

- important, exciting, and long-term **opportunities** for communities, iwi and businesses in the aviation sector
- consistently **accessible, efficient and fair treatment** for New Zealanders and visitors using aviation services
- use of fossil fuels to reduce, and the sector to **transition to clean energy**, in line with New Zealand's and the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO's) target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The Interim Council's role in developing the Aviation Action Plan

The Interim Council¹ was set up after the independent panel reviewing the Air Navigation System said, in its May 2023 report,² that improving system leadership was the critical priority for aviation.

The Panel's nine recommendations aimed to strengthen the system to seize future opportunities and challenges. The Panel recommended that system leadership be driven through:

- a ministerially-appointed Interim and then permanent Aviation Council with whole-of-system oversight responsibilities
- a new and long-range National Aviation Policy Statement
- a Flight Plan for New Zealand: a medium-term direction for aviation and air navigation.

The Interim Council, which will soon be replaced by a permanent Aviation Council, has developed this Aviation Action Plan as a response to the recommendation to develop a National Aviation Policy Statement. It delivers on the Air Navigation Systems Review's critical priority: improving system leadership and direction.

The Interim Council's role has been to provide a whole-of-system perspective on the current and future direction of aviation, focusing on system-level strategy, performance, change management and thought leadership. The Council takes an interest in, and provides guidance on, matters of national significance to the aviation sector.

The permanent Aviation Council will report to the Minister annually on progress against actions. The Council will also keep the Action Plan current by reviewing and refreshing it every 3 years.



Photo: Air New Zealand

¹ Members of the Interim Council are listed in in [Annex 1](#).

² <https://www.transport.govt.nz/area-of-interest/air-transport/aviation-system-review>

Aviation in New Zealand

Aviation is critically important to help grow New Zealand's economy by facilitating resilient global connections, tourism and trade. Given our location and our geography, aviation is necessary for international travel. It also plays an important role in supporting our domestic economy and our connections to one another.

Aviation supports tourism and connects New Zealanders to the world

Aviation contributes to the Government's aims to boost international visitor numbers and drive economic growth. Aviation makes it possible for millions of tourists to visit each year and allows New Zealanders to travel overseas. Increased tourism leads to higher passenger volumes, which directly boost revenue from ticket sales, airport fees, and services such as parking, and retail. Tourism supports local businesses including hotels, restaurants, and attractions and helps create jobs in the tourism sector. International tourism numbers have increased but have not yet fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels,³ unlike they have in many other countries.

Airlines operating into and from New Zealand offer direct flights to over 35 international destinations including in Australia, Southeast and North Asia, the

Middle East, North and South America, and the Pacific. International aviation connections support social connections: over 30 per cent of international visitors to New Zealand in the three months ending 30 September 2024 were visiting friends and family as the primary purpose of their trip.⁴

Aviation supports trade

Aviation plays a vital role in the transport of high value, perishable and time-critical products that must reach international markets in a timely way like seafood, value-added dairy products, and fresh produce. Efficient air freight services transport these products to international markets quickly, maintaining their quality and competitiveness. Domestic air cargo services provide time critical connections to export hubs for many of these products.

Air freight capacity is heavily dependent on passenger volumes. High passenger revenues mean cargo can be carried in belly-holds of passenger aircraft at a lower cost than on planes dedicated to air freight. This means that air freight capacity is affected by passenger demand and not freight demand alone.⁵

The importance of international air connectivity was apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic. With Government support, the aviation sector continued to import essential supplies such as vaccines, and export valuable products to world markets.

³ There were 3,397,786 overseas visitor arrivals in the year ending March 2025, still short of the 3,920,666 overseas visitor arrivals in the year ending March 2019. Source: Statistics NZ Infoshare.

⁴ MBIE International Visitor Survey <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism-research-and-data/tourism-data-releases/international-visitor-survey-ivs>

⁵ Aotearoa New Zealand Freight and Supply Chain Strategy: Government Policy, p 47

Aviation helps connect the regions

Air connectivity is important to the prosperity of regional New Zealand, enabling regional communities to access critical services (such as healthcare, and in response to natural disasters) and supporting regional economies.

Innovation in aviation

Aviation is a driving force of global technology development and innovations. Innovations in aircraft technology, fuel efficiency, and digital services can create opportunities for new entrants, services, and options for consumers. For example, drones have become embedded in the agricultural and forestry industries due to their diverse applications such as inspecting irrigation equipment, monitoring pesticides and fertilisers, and gathering plant and environmental data. Emerging aviation technologies will increasingly change the way passengers and freight are moved.

Innovation also supports growth by improving competitiveness, connectivity, efficiency and cost savings – but it can raise new risks to safety, security and privacy that must be carefully managed.

New Zealand already has a significant advanced aviation sector which contributes approximately \$500M to New Zealand's economy annually and supports around 3,700 FTE positions in New Zealand.⁶ New Zealand's advanced aviation and space sector has a higher share of export earnings and higher concentration of research and development relative to the overall economy.

⁶ Space and advanced aviation economic report 2025: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/space/new-zealand->

General aviation and aerial work contribute economically and to the community

General aviation and aerial work (aviation activities other than commercial air transport) also make an important economic contribution. Activities such as sight-seeing and skydiving flights, flight instruction, ground aviation services, and agricultural aviation support economic activity in the regions.

Essential services like disaster support and relief, firefighting, aero-medical flights, and search and rescue operations provide vital, lifesaving assistance. Sport and recreational aviation provide social benefits to the wider community. General aviation also plays a key part in the aviation system workforce and capability supply chain.

Military aviation plays an important part

Military aviation plays a central role in securing our nation's strategic interests, and supporting Realm and Pacific partners, in combination with partner nations. The military also supports domestic disaster response.

The sector faces change

Despite its strengths, the aviation sector is facing challenges and undergoing change. The sector has always been dynamic, searching for new and profitable routes while managing the challenges of flying to and within a distant small market.

Sector participants have raised concerns about the rising costs of doing business in

New Zealand. The sector faces increased cumulative cost pressures, with increases in charges, fees and levies, higher maintenance costs for airlines due to issues with the supply of engines and parts, and a shortage of aircraft globally to drive industry growth. New Zealand communities expect a lot from the aviation sector in terms of affordable connectivity, which is increasingly challenging to provide under the circumstances outlined. These cumulative cost pressures require every participant in the aviation sector, from government to business, to operate as efficiently as possible.

The sector is also facing difficulties in attracting and retaining highly skilled

personnel in a competitive global labour market. We are also in a period of high international macroeconomic uncertainty. Geopolitical shifts and factors that depress global GDP, such as volatile fuel prices, also impact on growth.

This Action Plan focuses on the future, but also acknowledges and helps to address shorter term issues identified by the sector. It is essential for the sector and government to work together to set a shared ambition and direction for aviation in New Zealand. The actions are key stepping stones towards realising the Council's ambition for the sector.



Photo: Kea Aerospace

Aviation's contribution – by the numbers

Tourism impact

- International visitors' contribution to the economy **\$16.9** billion (Mar 2024).⁷
- Domestic tourism expenditure **\$27.5** billion – (March 2024).⁸
- Overseas visitor arrivals **3.40** million - (March 2025).⁹

Freight contribution

- **16%** of exports carried by airfreight (value).
- **22%** of imports carried by airfreight (value).
- **217,000** tonnes air cargo carried through airports in New Zealand, supporting total import and export volumes (2023).¹⁰

Economic and employment

- Aviation contributed **5.6%** of GDP, \$14.2 billion USD (IATA estimate, 2023)¹¹.
- Employment at Auckland Airport generated **\$1.4** billion (2024).¹²
- **14,000** people employed in Aviation and Airport Services in 2023.¹³
- Commercial air transport supports **177,000** jobs (IATA estimate, 2023).¹⁴

⁷ <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/tourism-satellite-account-year-ended-march-2024/>

⁸ <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/tourism-satellite-account-year-ended-march-2024/>

⁹ Extracted from <https://infoshare.stats.govt.nz/Default.aspx>; Total passenger movements by travel mode less NZ-resident traveller arrivals by travel mode

¹⁰ <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/the-value-of-air-transport-to-new-zealand/>

¹¹ <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/the-value-of-air-transport-to-new-zealand/>

¹² <https://corporate.aucklandairport.co.nz/-/media/Files/Corporate/241015-Final-Auckland-Airport-Economic-Impact-Analysis.ashx>

¹³ The "Aviation and Airport Services" industry consists of businesses involved in aircraft manufacturing and repair, airport operations, and air transport services. <https://ringahora.nz/for-industry/skills-leadership/workforce-development-plan-2023/aviation-airport-services-workforce-action-plan/>

¹⁴ <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/the-value-of-air-transport-to-new-zealand/>

Ambition: our world-class aviation regulatory environment is robust, internationally credible, and nimble, allowing businesses and New Zealanders to thrive (priority area)

To thrive, the aviation system needs a well-designed regulatory environment. The Council's ambition is a world-class regulatory framework that:

- is robust, internationally credible, and achieves high standards of safety and security (including a positive safety and security culture)
- promotes competition, safe innovation and economic development
- provides greater certainty and timeliness for sector participants (including new entrants) and allows businesses to thrive so that the industry feels supported, not stifled, by regulation
- is adaptable, keeps pace with innovation, can manage the demands of both conventional aviation and advanced aviation, and can integrate evolving markets and other regulatory regimes
- is risk-based, fair and proportionate, supported by evidence, outcome-focused, and enabling
- is efficient and minimises complexity so that it achieves its objectives with the least possible administrative burden and cost.

To achieve this, the government will enhance and reform civil aviation rules, in

line with a prioritised 2-year rolling work programme. The approach will be informed by strategic planning, agreed principles of good rule design, and stakeholder engagement.

Recommendations from ICAO will be prioritised.

As well as updating the rules' content, the government will set the framework up for the future by making it more flexible and easier to amend. This work will utilise new provisions in the Civil Aviation Act 2023 and look for innovative ways to improve processes so that updating the regulatory framework is as efficient as possible. This may draw on lessons from other jurisdictions and organisations.

Advanced aviation

To make the most of opportunities from advanced aviation, we need to:

- design faster, leaner, agile processes to help improve throughput and allow the regulatory system to keep pace with change
- enable safe and secure experimental areas to develop and proof new aviation technologies
- provide clear pathways for approvals to use those technologies in the aviation system, both domestically and internationally.

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead	Initial Action
CAA and Ministry of Transport, with input from the sector	Rework specific rules to allow for safe innovation and growth in the advanced aviation sector, and contribute to improving the pace of regulatory decision-making, while continuously improving safety and security – to be implemented by the end of 2025.
Ministry of Transport and CAA	<p>By the end of 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 2-year, prioritised rolling rule-making programme, tested with the sector, and focused on implementing ICAO recommendations, improving efficiency, safety and security and enabling innovation • Enhance the efficiency of rule-making.
CAA	<p>Lift the quality of service and speed up certification decision-making by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving resourcing and processes • Replacing paper-heavy processes with smarter, more accessible systems • Automating routine tasks. <p>(Timing contingent on the outcome of the CAA funding review.)</p>

Ambition: Aviation is a desirable career path; we have the talented and skilled people we need for the sector to grow (priority area)

The aviation workforce is critical to the success of the whole aviation system. The Council's long-term ambition is that aviation provides attractive, highly skilled jobs in New Zealand and is a desirable career path. This means overcoming global personnel shortages and developing the attributes, knowledge and competencies that the aviation system will need in the future. As part of achieving this ambition, the Council is focused on addressing the sector's more immediate workforce challenges, including worker shortages, a fragmented workforce pipeline, and uncoordinated incentives across the workforce ecosystem.

Ringa Hora¹⁵ reports that, of the people who joined the industry in 2015, only 60% remained after the first year, and 22% after five years.¹⁶ If we do not act to promote aviation as a career path, improve recruitment and retention, and ensure that working in the New Zealand aviation sector is an attractive option for personnel with globally portable skills, the system faces worsening shortages of key aviation personnel such as pilots and engineering staff.

The Council wants to see increased participation by Māori and women in the



Photo: Air New Zealand

sector. Māori are significantly underrepresented in the aviation workforce: the Māori aviation workforce is just 8% of the total aviation workforce, despite Māori making up just over 17% of the overall New Zealand population.¹⁷ Women make up 41% of the aviation workforce, but this drops as low as 15% in aircraft manufacturing and repair.

The Aviation Council will set up a programme of work to tackle workforce issues, for example by reviewing and streamlining training pipelines, and maximising the ability of personnel to transition between aviation careers.

¹⁵ Ringa Hora is the Workforce Development Council for the services sector.

¹⁶ <https://ringahora.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Ringa-Hora-Aviation-IAP-print.pdf>

¹⁷ The Ringa Hora workforce development council has reported on their engagement with Māori in aviation:

<https://ringahora.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Kaupapa-Maori-Aviation-hui-findings-final-Jul24.pdf>.

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead	Initial Action
Ministry of Education	Provide advice to Ministers on issues related to training in the aviation sector and how they contribute to workforce challenges in civil aviation, and develop options for policy changes that address these issues.
Ringa Hora	<p>Improve the relevance of the qualification for airlines by updating the pilot qualification, in consultation with the sector, by the end of 2025. This involves developing an airline-approved training programme that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be delivered over a shorter period • better aligns training to airlines' needs.
Ringa Hora	Work with industry partners, Aviation Council, and Transport, Immigration and Education officials to develop an aviation workforce package of options to address persistent challenges in the training and retention of aviation workforce – by end 2025.
Industry	<p>Collaborate on joint employment promotion activities to ensure aviation is seen as an attractive, diverse and rewarding sector for young people – by end 2026</p> <p>Report to the Council on options for the Council to help coordinate aviation graduates' placement and progression in the workforce – by end 2025.</p>
Ministry of Transport and MBIE	Work with the advanced aviation industry to identify projected skill set needs for the next 10 years, and recommend next steps – by end 2025.
CAA	Progress potential opportunities with like-minded partners and other States, where appropriate, to put in place mutual recognition agreements for licensing systems, licences, and the movement of aviation personnel.

Ambition: The aviation system has grown and is thriving, connected, resilient and productive, and it adopts innovations readily (priority area)

The Government is focused on boosting international visitor numbers, including to the regions, and driving economic growth.

To grow our economy, our aviation system should grow in a way that:

- maximises efficiency, including but not limited to innovative operational practices and the safe and secure adoption of new technologies
- strengthens its financial and environmental sustainability
- supports regional and international connectivity so that our tourism markets are well supported and New Zealand is an attractive destination.

This could involve government policies, improving data about the health of the sector, industry innovations and collaborative efforts to support growth.

It is important that the aviation system is an early adopter of innovation in technology and approaches. Using new

ideas, knowledge and technology to develop better ways of doing things helps the New Zealand economy grow and has potential to improve connectivity.

The sector has raised concerns about the rising costs of doing business in New Zealand. Over the last several years, charges, fees and levies have increased and costs have gone up significantly as supply chains have yet to recover following the Covid pandemic. The sector is calling for a sharper focus on costs and investment for sustainable growth.

Regional airlines in particular continue to face significant challenges following the Covid pandemic. The Government is supporting regional carriers in the short to medium term to ensure they can continue serving regional communities until the current conditions subside.

Growth requires a system-level approach, and the actions included in the other areas in the Aviation Action Plan also contribute to achieving this ambition.

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead	Initial Action
Ministry of Transport	Document costs borne by the sector, such as fees and charges – by end 2025.
Ministry of Transport	Develop an indicator framework to monitor the health of the aviation system by the end of 2025 and start collecting data in 2026.
Civil Aviation Authority	To ensure that the aviation funding model drives efficiencies in the regulator and participants while maintaining current levels of safety and security – undertake a system-wide first principles funding review by end 2027.
Airways NZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review of services and policy settings to ensure Airways' services are appropriate and can be efficiently delivered (end 2026). • Review Airways' pricing framework and consult with industry (mid 2027).
Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<p>Secure and support vulnerable regional routes by using the Regional Infrastructure Fund to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support regional airlines with acquisition or lease of aircraft, the procurement of essential aircraft components, and debt refinancing on concessionary terms • support information technology investment to enable interlining arrangements between regional airlines, Air New Zealand, and other participants <p>– from now until 2026.</p>

Ambition: Aviation infrastructure is well-planned and integrated, supports efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods and enables economic growth (priority area)

Aviation infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, airspace design, system communications, meteorological observation systems, energy supply, and take-off and landing points that are needed for a safe, secure and effective public network of air transport.

Airport planning, future-proofing and resilience are critical factors for success of the New Zealand aviation sector. New Zealand's aviation infrastructure is largely funded by users. Alongside meeting today's needs, there is a growing requirement to plan for future infrastructure to support aviation's transition to new fuels and aircraft types. The Infrastructure Commission's draft National Infrastructure Plan notes that it can be a challenge to build infrastructure to the same standard as more densely populated countries, because we don't have as many people to use and pay for it.¹⁸ New Zealand needs a planned approach to building infrastructure, and limited funding means careful prioritisation is essential.

It is important we have the necessary infrastructure to maintain a safe and secure aviation system, and:

- support growth and increased flight volumes safely and efficiently
- withstand extreme weather events and adapt to changing climate conditions



Photo: Airways New Zealand

- incorporate airspace requirements for advanced aviation while ensuring today's technology can operate with certainty into the future
- accommodate next generation aircraft technologies, sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for jets and electrification of smaller aircraft, additional energy generation and transmission, and urban mobility in the form of electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL)
- withstand new cyber threats to ensure the safety and integrity of operations support the security of our national interests with prescribed restricted airspace
- promote system resilience through established Military Air Bases
- provide long-term investment opportunities for communities, iwi and businesses, including through expanding commercial partnerships and collaboration.

¹⁸ p 5, Draft National Infrastructure Plan, <https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanganga-30-year-strategy/y5fhk1ya/nip-draft-web.pdf>

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead(s)	Initial Action
Air NZ	To support future focused investment decisions across the aviation system, Air New Zealand will continue to assess future infrastructure needs, including support for fleet expansion, jet fuel demand (both Jet A-1 and Sustainable Aviation Fuel) and electricity and transmission requirements for next generation aircraft, and convene with the energy sector for specific discussion – by December 2025.
Aviation Council	To support future focused investment decisions - outline infrastructure requirements for emerging technologies - by June 2026.
Ministry of Transport	Building on the above actions, map out the aviation infrastructure we need to support economic growth (including through tourism and trade opportunities), focusing on the must-haves for safety, security, and resilience - by end 2026.
Ministry of Transport, Airways, NZDF, MBIE	To ensure that New Zealand can remain "open for business" at all times, make Ohakea available on a permanent basis as an alternate runway – by December 2026.
Ministry of Transport with input from CAA and Airways	To enable the efficient, safe and secure use of airspace by more users, develop a future airspace and traffic management integration approach – by December 2027.
NZ Airports	Give input on minimum operating network requirements for air transport into the Infrastructure Commission's considerations for the National Infrastructure Plan – by December 2025.

Ambition: New Zealanders and visitors experience consistently accessible and efficient aviation services and are treated fairly

We want all passengers to enjoy accessible, safe and efficient air travel services. Consumers' rights, for example when flights are disrupted, are important to the Council – and of interest to the public.

Although many airlines voluntarily inform passengers about their rights, passengers may not always know about the protections they are entitled to. In some overseas jurisdictions, airlines are required by law to tell passengers their rights.

Disabled people can face challenges when travelling. It is essential for airports, airlines, government agencies (including the CAA and border agencies) and others to collaborate so that disabled people have a smooth experience throughout their journey – from checking in, through security and border checks, on to the aircraft, and through their destination airport. Improving services for New Zealand disabled people is also an opportunity to make New Zealand an attractive “accessible destination” for disabled people from other countries.

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead	Initial Action
Aviation Council	To help ensure that disabled people enjoy accessible and efficient air travel services throughout their journey – identify quick wins to improve air travel for disabled people by early 2026, in consultation with disabled people and the broader sector, and then implement them.
Ministry of Transport	Provide advice to the Minister responsible for aviation about what other countries require airlines to disclose to passengers about their rights, taking into account information that airlines already provide – by early 2026.

Ambition: We are reducing use of fossil fuels and transitioning to clean energy, in line with New Zealand's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050

Aviation is a “hard to abate” sector, but international efforts to develop and adopt sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and more efficient aircraft can reduce the industry's carbon footprint. Sustainable aviation can also create new economic opportunities as new forms of propulsion become more viable, and through the use of software and uncrewed vehicles. New technologies such as electric aircraft may have potential to reduce operating costs thereby improving the economic viability of some regional routes.

New Zealand has committed to ICAO's global Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) of Net Zero by 2050 and the intermediary goal to reduce CO₂ emissions in international aviation by 5 per cent by 2030. New Zealand is voluntarily

participating in ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), a global market-based measure for reducing and offsetting carbon emissions in the international aviation sector.

The Council's ambition is that:

- all involved in the system work to reduce use of fossil fuels and promote a transition to clean energy, in line with New Zealand's and ICAO's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- New Zealand continues to affirm its participation in CORSIA
- New Zealand participates fully in international forums responsible for negotiating aviation emission targets.

First set of actions towards our ambition

Lead	Initial Action
Ministry of Transport and industry	Commence work in 2025 on the 2+2 Climate and Finance dialogue to develop regional collaboration on SAF uptake and supply.
Industry	Participate in Bioenergy Australia-led process on regional sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) strategy and develop advice to the Jet Zero Council - 2025 and first half 2026.
Ministry of Transport	Affirm our voluntary participation in Carbon Offsetting Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) at the 2025 ICAO General Assembly.

Maintaining the foundations of a strong aviation system

Our participation in the international aviation system is strategic and we pursue additional capacity coming into New Zealand where it is in New Zealand's interests

As a sector that operates across borders, international harmonisation is the foundation for international aviation and a key principle of our domestic regulatory framework. It is imperative that all countries uphold the principles set out in the 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation (also known as Chicago Convention) to protect the global aviation system.

Government will continue to engage internationally as part of maintaining our strong aviation system, aiming to do so in a way that is:

- proactive – by influencing international aviation outcomes that align and advance New Zealand's interests
- outcomes-focused – by adhering to international aviation conventions and adopting best practices for informed regulatory decisions to meet the required outcomes
- supportive – by aiding Pacific Island nations to foster economic growth, enhance connectivity, promote sustainability, and build resilience
- reputable – by elevating New Zealand's standing as a responsible aviation regulator and constructive participant in the international aviation system
- growth-oriented – by building international relationships that enhance our knowledge of best practices and enable economic activity and growth, and pursue additional capacity where it is in New Zealand's interests.

We maintain high standards of safety and security

Our aviation sector relies on safety and security. As part of maintaining high standards of safety and security, it will be important to embed a best practice safety and security culture throughout the sector and through each participant's habits, practices and interactions.

New Zealand will maintain its State Safety Programme (SSP)¹⁹ and National Aviation Safety Plan. Both are required by ICAO. The purpose of the National Aviation Safety Plan is to combine global and regional safety priorities with our own

safety risks, into a plan that is relevant to us. The plan will identify national safety issues, define national goals, targets, and measures for safety, and present initiatives to address safety risks.

ICAO also requires states to have an up-to-date National Civil Aviation Security Programme to outline roles and responsibilities within the security system and the legislation, rules and guidance which support positive security outcomes. We will continue to maintain, oversee and implement our programme.

¹⁹ <https://www.aviation.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/our-role-in-aviation-safety/state-safety-programme/>

We will respond to ICAO's recommendations for how we can improve aviation safety and security, including recommendations from ICAO's most recent audits to assess New Zealand's implementation of international best practice (in particular, our implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices).

The Ministry of Transport is working collaboratively with the CAA and AvSec, and key industry members, to improve operational efficiency of the current aviation security service while maintaining safety and security outcomes.

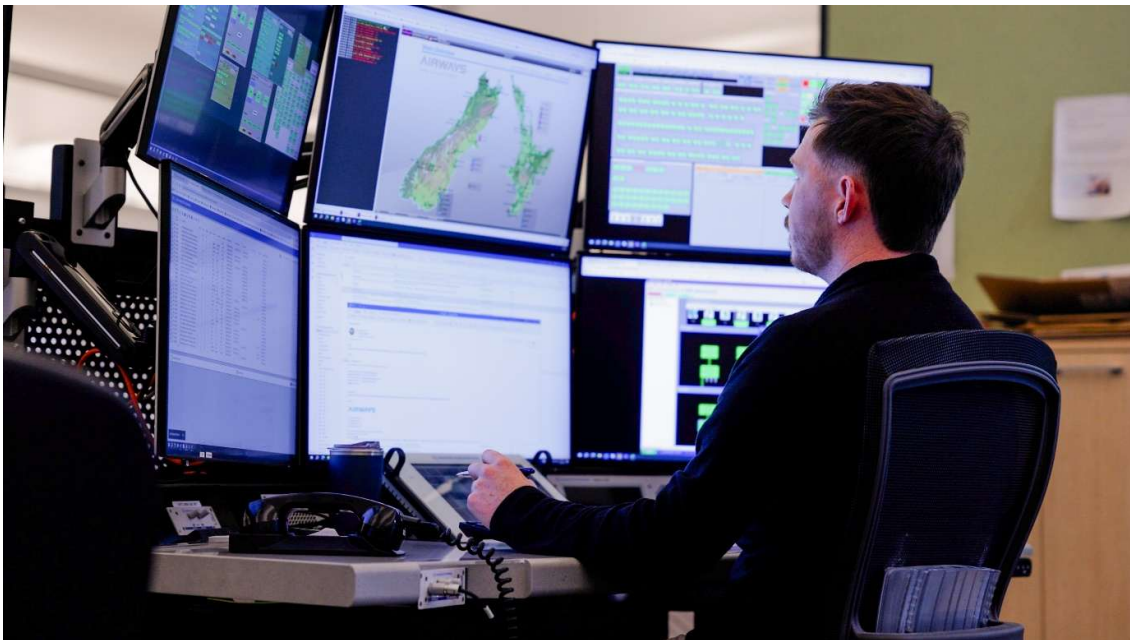


Photo: Airways NZ

Annex 1 – Interim Aviation Council membership

The Interim Council included representatives from the following organisations:

- Ministry of Transport (chair)
- Air New Zealand
- Air Ruatoria
- Airways Corporation of New Zealand
- Auckland International Airport Limited
- Aviation Industry Association New Zealand
- Board of Airline Representatives of New Zealand
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
- New Zealand Air Line Pilots Association
- New Zealand Airports Association
- New Zealand Aviation Federation
- New Zealand Defence Force
- Wisk Aero.

Annex 2 – Roles and responsibilities

Industry, government and not-for-profit organisations have important roles to play in the aviation sector.

- **The private sector** owns and operates airports, air operators (including those providing scheduled passenger services, air cargo services, adventure aviation, charters, agricultural aviation, and advanced aviation), maintenance providers, manufacturers, training providers, and many other businesses directly and indirectly involved in the aviation sector. These businesses play a large role in maintaining operational standards, investing in infrastructure, and driving innovation. The private sector is best placed to lead and drive change in the sector.
- **The government** has an enabling role, overseeing the regulatory framework for aviation to ensure safety and security while enabling efficiency and growth, and to ensure that the market continues to work effectively. The military has a key role in securing our national strategic interests. The government also looks to maintain New Zealand's international reputation. The government also owns or part-owns several airports and has a 51 percent stake in Air New Zealand but does not look to actively intervene in the market.
- **Industry associations, unions, federations and other organisations** represent aviation businesses and professionals working in the sector. These organisations play an important role in ensuring members' views and interests are understood and considered.
- **Local authorities** wholly own 23 airports and partially own several others (including the joint-venture airports²⁰). Through District and Regional Plans, local government can enable and influence commercial aviation activity.
- **Not-for-profit organisations** provide emergency services and are involved in sport and recreational aviation.

Minister of Transport/Acting Minister of Transport

The Minister of Transport responsible for aviation sets New Zealand's policy direction for aviation which includes establishing the laws, regulations, and rules that govern the aviation sector. The Minister ensures that aviation policies align with national goals for safety, security, and economic growth and that they implement international commitments.

Other ministers also play a part in the aviation system; for example, currently, the Minister for Space is responsible for advanced aviation.

Interim Aviation Council / Aviation Council

The Interim Aviation Council's origins and role are described on page 5.

The permanent Council will build on the Interim Council's work by:

²⁰ A joint-venture airport is one where the Crown and a local council partner to operate and manage the airport. The Crown shares the cost of capital expenditure and deficits whilst the council manages day-to-day operations.

- providing a whole-of-system strategic perspective by drawing insights from across the sector on aviation matters of national significance, to promote economic growth, safety, and sustainability
- identifying and advising on emerging issues for the sector, and on other actions that could help to achieve the Council's ambitions
- sharing its insights with the Minister responsible for aviation, policymakers and the sector itself
- fostering collaboration and coordinated action across the aviation sector and government to address challenges for the sector, for the benefit of the sector and New Zealand
- implementing Council-led actions in the Action Plan
- monitoring the impact that the agreed actions are having on the aviation system, and reporting to the Minister every 12 months on progress
- advising on how best to progress any outstanding recommendations of the Air Navigation System Review
- reviewing and refreshing the Aviation Action Plan every three years.

Roles and responsibilities of organisations

- The **Ministry of Transport** provides strategic advice to the Minister on the policy and regulatory settings for the aviation system.
- The **Ministry of Education** provides strategic policy advice for the education sector, including tertiary education provision that contributes to the skills, knowledge, and capabilities needed to fully participate in the labour market, society, and communities.
- The **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)** develops and delivers policy, services, advice, and regulation to support economic growth and the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealanders. It plays a key role in various sectors, including aviation and tourism. It also sets policy to support and plan for the energy security of the aviation sector.
- **Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)** is New Zealand's specialist aviation safety and security regulator. It ensures compliance with aviation safety standards, oversees the certification and surveillance of aviation activities, and collaborates with international aviation organisations. The CAA makes and amends civil aviation rules under contract from the Ministry of Transport.
- **Aviation Security Service (AvSec)** is an operational unit within the CAA. AvSec is responsible for aviation security in New Zealand. It screens passengers and their luggage, ensuring compliance with security regulations and maintaining a safe travel environment.
- The **New Zealand Customs Service, Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)** and **Immigration New Zealand** also work at the New Zealand border.
- The **New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF)** has a key role in securing our national strategic interests, in particular our Exclusive Economic Zone and supporting Realm and Pacific nations. The NZDF supports the New Zealand government by maintaining a range of combat capabilities to secure our national interests.

The NZDF operates within its own Defence Aviation Rules which, while closely aligned to Civil Aviation Rules, provide additional operational response options when directed. The NZDF has three established Military Air Bases and restricted airspace that provide system resilience and support partner military engagement. Beyond those core combat tasks the NZDF supports civil aviation through search and rescue operations, disaster response, and missions in support of the New Zealand Police, Customs, MPI and other agencies. The NZDF contributes personnel across the entire aviation system as they transition out of military careers to civil roles.

- **Airways Corporation of New Zealand (Airways)** provides air traffic control and navigation services. It ensures the safe and efficient movement of aircraft within New Zealand and oceanic airspace. As New Zealand's air navigation service provider, Airways is responsible for delivering air traffic services to ensure the safe and efficient operation of both civil and military aircraft in New Zealand's controlled airspace. Airways provides information to aircraft traveling in uncontrolled airspace, provides an alerting service for aircraft in distress, and delivers aeronautical telecommunication services and meteorological services. Through its subsidiary companies, Airways provides aeronautical information management, procedure design and other training and digital services and products.
- **Meteorological Service of New Zealand Ltd (MetService)** provides a range of **aviation** weather products and services, including observations, forecasts, warnings, and volcanic ash advisory services for New Zealand airspace. MetService also supports civil aviation and defence for search and rescue operations, disaster response, and collaboration with other national and private weather service providers and ICAO.

Industry organisations

- The **Aviation Industry Association New Zealand** represents the commercial aviation industry in New Zealand. Members come from many sectors of the industry, such as agriculture, scheduled and charter services, freight, search and rescue, and tourism, and companies that service, maintain, design or manufacture for these sectors. AIANZ also represents uncrewed aerial vehicle (UAV) businesses.
- The **Board of Airline Representatives of New Zealand** is the voice of the airline industry in New Zealand, representing 26 airline members and 5 non-airline members. It champions the airline industry and its contribution to travel, trade and tourism in New Zealand.
- The **New Zealand Air Line Pilots Association** is an internationally affiliated professional association and trade union that represents over 2,600 New Zealand pilots, air traffic controllers and flight service operators and is associated with trade unions representing other professionals in the aviation sector.
- The **New Zealand Airports Association** is the peak industry body dedicated to supporting New Zealand's airports and the broader aviation sector. NZ Airports represents 49 airport members ranging from New Zealand's largest airports to small aerodromes.
- The **New Zealand Aviation Federation** unites various sectors of General Aviation (this excludes scheduled and non-scheduled air transport for hire) to discuss and present issues to regulators, covering activities from private and recreational flying to agricultural and aerial work.

Iwi and hapū

Iwi and hapū have interests in, and ambitions about, aviation matters including infrastructure, workforce development, environmental sustainability, boosting exports (including tourism) and regional economic development. For example:

- as part of the Crown's Treaty settlement with Ngāi Tahu, the iwi has the first opportunity to acquire a large range of Crown assets, at their current market value. These assets will become available to Ngāi Tahu as and when the Crown chooses to sell them.
Ngai Tahu have the right of first refusal for the Crown's 50% shareholdings in each of Dunedin and Invercargill airports, 25% shareholding in Christchurch airport (subject to existing pre-emptive rights) and the assets of Milford airport
- in 2018 Ngāti Porou and Air New Zealand signed a Partnership Agreement aimed at generating further economic and social growth in Tairāwhiti Gisborne
- Auckland Airport and Waikato-Tainui have built 2 hotels together through a joint venture.

Iwi and hapū have important relationships with airports around the country.

Annex 3 – List of actions

Lead(s)	Initial Action
<i>Ambition: our world-class aviation regulatory environment is robust, internationally credible, and nimble, allowing businesses and New Zealanders to thrive (priority area)</i>	
CAA and Ministry of Transport, with input from the sector	Rework specific rules to allow for safe innovation and growth in the advanced aviation sector, and contribute to improving the pace of regulatory decision-making, while continuously improving safety and security – to be implemented by the end of 2025.
Ministry of Transport and CAA	By the end of 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 2-year, prioritised rolling rule-making programme, tested with the sector, and focused on implementing ICAO recommendations, improving efficiency, safety and security and enabling innovation • Enhance the efficiency of rule-making.
CAA	Lift the quality of service and speed up certification decision-making by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving resourcing and processes • Replacing paper-heavy processes with smarter, more accessible systems • Automating routine tasks. (Timing contingent on the outcome of the CAA funding review.)
<i>Ambition: Aviation is a desirable career path; we have the talented and skilled people we need for the sector to grow (priority area)</i>	
Ministry of Education	Provide advice to Ministers on issues related to training in the aviation sector and how they contribute to workforce challenges in civil aviation, and develop options for policy changes that address these issues.
Ringa Hora	Improve the relevance of the qualification for airlines by updating the pilot qualification, in consultation with the sector, by the end of 2025. This involves developing an airline-approved training programme that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be delivered over a shorter period • better aligns training to airlines' needs.
Ringa Hora	Work with industry partners, Aviation Council, and Transport, Immigration and Education officials to develop an aviation workforce package of options to address persistent challenges in the training and retention of aviation workforce – by end 2025.

Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate on joint employment promotion activities to ensure aviation is seen as an attractive, diverse and rewarding sector for young people – by end 2026 Report to the Council on options for the Council to help coordinate aviation graduates' placement and progression in the workforce – by end 2025.
Ministry of Transport and MBIE	Work with the advanced aviation industry to identify projected skill set needs for the next 10 years, and recommend next steps – by end 2025.
CAA	Progress potential opportunities with like-minded partners and other States, where appropriate, to put in place mutual recognition agreements for licensing systems, licences, and the movement of aviation personnel.
<i>Ambition: The aviation system has grown and is thriving, connected, resilient and productive, and it adopts innovations readily (priority area)</i>	
Ministry of Transport	Document costs borne by the sector, such as fees and charges – by end 2025.
Ministry of Transport	Develop an indicator framework to monitor the health of the aviation system by the end of 2025 and start collecting data in 2026.
Civil Aviation Authority	To ensure that the aviation funding model drives efficiencies in the regulator and participants while maintaining current levels of safety and security – undertake a system-wide first principles funding review by end 2027.
Airways NZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of services and policy settings to ensure Airways' services are appropriate and can be efficiently delivered (end 2026). Review Airways' pricing framework and consult with industry (mid 2027).
Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<p>Secure and support vulnerable regional routes by using the Regional Infrastructure Fund to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support regional airlines with acquisition or lease of aircraft, the procurement of essential aircraft components, and debt refinancing on concessionary terms support information technology investment to enable interlining arrangements between regional airlines, Air New Zealand, and other participants– from now until 2026.
<i>Ambition: Aviation infrastructure is well-planned and integrated, supports efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods and enables economic growth (priority area)</i>	

Air NZ	To support future focused investment decisions across the aviation system Air New Zealand will continue to assess future infrastructure needs, including support for fleet expansion, jet fuel demand (both Jet A-1 and Sustainable Aviation Fuel) and electricity and transmission requirements for next generation aircraft, and convene with the energy sector for specific discussion - by December 2025.
Aviation Council	To support future focused investment decisions - outline infrastructure requirements for emerging technologies - by June 2026.
Ministry of Transport	Building on the above actions, map out the aviation infrastructure we need to support economic growth (including through tourism and trade opportunities), focusing on the must-haves for safety, security, and resilience - by end 2026.
Ministry of Transport, Airways, NZDF, MBIE	To ensure that New Zealand can remain "open for business" at all times - make Ohakea available on a permanent basis as an alternate runway – by December 2026.
Ministry of Transport with input from CAA and Airways	To enable the efficient, safe and secure use of airspace by more users - develop a future airspace and traffic management integration approach - by December 2027.
NZ Airports	Give input on minimum operating network requirements for air transport into the Infrastructure Commission's considerations for the National Infrastructure Plan – by December 2025.
<i>Ambition: New Zealanders and visitors experience consistently accessible and efficient aviation services and are treated fairly</i>	
Aviation Council	To help ensure that disabled people enjoy accessible and efficient air travel services throughout their journey – identify quick wins to improve air travel for disabled people by early 2026, in consultation with disabled people and the broader sector, and then implement them.
Ministry of Transport	Provide advice to the Minister responsible for aviation about what other countries require airlines to disclose to passengers about their rights, taking into account information that airlines already provide – by early 2026.
<i>Ambition: We are reducing use of fossil fuels and transitioning to clean energy, in line with New Zealand's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050</i>	
Ministry of Transport and industry	Commence work in 2025 with Australian Ministerial counterparts on the 2+2 Climate and Finance dialogue to develop regional collaboration on SAF uptake and supply.

Industry	Participate in Bioenergy Australia-led process on regional sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) strategy and develop advice to the Jet Zero Council - 2025 and first half 2026.
Ministry of Transport	Affirm our voluntary participation in Carbon Offsetting Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) at the 2025 ICAO General Assembly.