

National Air Facilitation Committee | Terms of Reference

Background

As a Contracting State to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (the Convention), New Zealand has certain obligations to adopt all practical measures to facilitate air transport and to prevent unnecessary delays arising under immigration, quarantine, customs and clearance laws. These obligations arise primarily from Articles 22, 23 and 37 of the Convention, and Annex 9 (Facilitation) to the Convention.

Facilitation¹ may be defined as a combination of measures, and human and material resources, intended to improve and optimise aircraft, crew, passenger, cargo, baggage, mail and stores flows through airports while ensuring compliance with relevant international and national legislation. Annex 9 identifies the establishment of a National Air Facilitation Committee as a key enabler of an effective facilitation regime.

In 2024, the Border Executive Board approved the re-establishment of a New Zealand National Air Facilitation Committee (the Committee) and approved a National Air Facilitation Programme.

Role of the National Air Facilitation Committee

The Committee's role is to:

- i. maintain and revise the National Air Facilitation Programme, as appropriate; see <https://www.transport.govt.nz/area-of-interest/air-transport/air-facilitation>
- ii. promote and encourage the facilitation and expedition of departure and arrival formalities for air transport;
- iii. provide suggestions on the most practical and efficient methods of implementing provisions of the Convention and its Annexes which are relevant to facilitation matters;
- v. ensure that New Zealand is represented at formal meetings of the ICAO Facilitation Division and ICAO Asia-Pacific area facilitation meetings where representation is appropriate, as well as any other facilitation fora where representation is appropriate;
- vi. ensure that New Zealand airports with scheduled international air services establish their own facilitation committees to meet as required and to consider day-to-day issues arising at the airport.

Membership

The government departments represented on the Committee are:

- Ministry of Transport (Chair)

¹ There are also some facilitation aspects associated with aviation security.

- Civil Aviation Authority
- New Zealand Customs Service
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Immigration New Zealand)
- Ministry for Primary Industries (Biosecurity New Zealand)
- Ministry of Health
- Department of Internal Affairs
- New Zealand Police.

The following organisations are also members of the Committee:

- New Zealand Airports Association
- Board of Airline Representatives of New Zealand
- Air New Zealand
- Auckland International Airport Limited
- Christchurch International Airport Limited
- Dunedin International Airport Limited
- Hamilton Airport
- Queenstown Airport Corporation
- Wellington International Airport Limited.

Other airports will be entitled to become members if and when they start offering international flights. Other organisations, such as the Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Federation of New Zealand, may be invited to participate in Committee meetings, as appropriate, on an ad hoc basis.

It is expected all Committee members, including the Chair, will observe the following general expectations of conduct:

- work in an inclusive manner where diverse voices of all members are listened to and heard equally in an environment of trust and respect, within which all members can safely share their views;
- take collective responsibility for the actions and decisions of the Committee;
- meet all necessary privacy, security and legal requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of the Official Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 2020; and
- maintain and safeguard the confidentiality of information submitted to them or obtained in carrying out their role.

Airport facilitation committees

The functions of airport facilitation committees at airports are to:

- coordinate implementation of the facilitation programme;

- seek ways to resolve facilitation issues;
- report annually to the Committee on facilitation activities.

Work Progression

Should work need to be progressed outside of the annual meeting, the Committee may decide to establish subgroups and working groups as necessary.

Relationship with Border Executive Board

The Border Executive Board has been established to deliver an integrated and effective border system, which includes facilitation. The Committee, which is a requirement of the International Civil Aviation Organization, will liaise with the Border Executive Board, but it will not look to duplicate the Board's work. The Committee will forward to the Border Executive Board the minutes of its annual meeting. The Committee also provides an opportunity for a high-level discussion of developments in facilitation, both nationally and globally, with a wider range of stakeholders than those on the Border Executive Board.

Communications

Only the Chair of the Committee shall make public statements on behalf of the Committee. All media requests for Committee comment received shall be referred to the Secretariat. Members can express the views of their individual organisation in the public or the media at any time if these are not presented as the views of the Committee.

Secretariat

The Ministry of Transport will provide secretariat support for the Committee.

The Secretariat will be responsible for meeting administration, including associated pre- and post-meeting activities, and all communications activity on behalf of the Committee.

The Ministry will publish the final Terms of Reference for the Committee and final minutes of its meetings, subject to any appropriate redactions, after these minutes have been reviewed and approved by Committee members. This will be through a round robin process given the Committee only meets annually.

Term

The Committee does not have a fixed term. It is up to the member organisations to nominate their representative to the Committee.

Meetings

Meetings will be chaired by a senior official from the Ministry of Transport.

Meetings will be hosted at the Ministry's Wellington office for those attending in person. Virtual attendance will also be possible.

Meetings will be held annually, usually mid-year.

At its meetings, the Committee will:

- consider the activities of the airport committees and any subgroups or working groups over the preceding year

- review matters arising from the work of ICAO to gain a comprehensive view of ICAO developments affecting New Zealand, and provide feedback as appropriate.

The Committee meeting is a comprehensive forum to consider facilitation issues and exchange views on facilitation trends, both internationally and domestically. The Committee will also determine if any amendments to the National Air Facilitation Programme are necessary.

Terms of Reference approved by the National Facilitation Committee on 7 August 2025