

OC241397

17 December 2024

Tēnā koe,

I refer to your email to the New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS), dated 20 November 2024, requesting, among other items, the following document under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

“Hamilton Airport Engagement Monthly Update – 8 November 2024”

On 28 November 2024, the request for this document was transferred from NZCS to the Ministry of Transport.

This document has been attached, with certain information withheld under the following sections of the Act:

9(2)(f)(iv)	to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials
9(2)(h)	to maintain legal professional privilege
18(d)	the information requested is or will soon be publicly available

With regard to the information withheld under Section 9 of the Act, we consider the reasons for withholding that information at this time are not outweighed by any 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 website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā



Dr Natasha Rave
Manager Resilience and Security

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Hamilton Airport Engagement Monthly Joint Agency Update – 8

6 September 2024

Background

1. On 26 March, officials received a letter of intent from Waikato Regional Airport Limited (WRAL), who operate Hamilton Airport, stating that they were negotiating with Qantas/Jetstar to start two new international services (3 - 7 flights per week) to the Gold Coast and Sydney by 1 July 2025. WRAL have confirmed their intent to commence flights from 16 June 2025.
2. The Minister of Transport and the Minister for Biosecurity have requested officials provide joint Ministers (including Ministers responsible for Transport, Biosecurity, Customs, Immigration, and Health) with a coordinated weekly update on the engagement with WRAL. Following the weekly update for 16 August 2024, Ministers agreed to change the frequency to monthly.
3. Relevant government agencies have contributed to and support the contents of this monthly update.

WRAL/Jetstar update

4. WRAL expect a public announcement for the new international service will occur on 16 September 2024, however, this is still being confirmed with Qantas/Jetstar. It is anticipated that this will be in the media domain from midnight 15 September NZDT. Ministers' offices will be provided with key reactive messages to support the announcement.
5. Agencies and WRAL remain subject to the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).

Operational planning

6. Agencies have confirmed with WRAL that they require the airport site to be operationally ready on 2 June 2025, two weeks in advance of the first expected flight on 16 June 2025. WRAL will provide agencies with an updated programme plan to reflect critical dates.
7. Agencies are working with WRAL to prepare the concept design for the site, which will confirm the space required for agency work areas, passenger queueing, and adequate passenger throughput. The concept design requires endorsement from the WRAL Board to enable WRAL to engage necessary consultants and to order equipment with long lead-times.
8. WRAL is hosting all agencies for a walk through, tentatively booked for 24 September 2024, and after this the concept design will be finalised. Once the concept design is finalised, agencies and WRAL will be able to commence detailed design.
9. Having received the term(s) sheet and letter of intent from Qantas/JetStar, WRAL is proceeding with the required regulatory applications (e.g. Customs Controlled Area, Biosecurity Controlled Area, Security Designation) and agencies can begin relevant regulatory approvals processes and equipment procurement. Agencies are supporting WRAL through the application process.

Agency establishment and initial processing costs

10. The New Zealand Customs Service and Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) have communicated formally with WRAL, articulating establishment costs and initial processing costs to allow implementation planning to begin. The final funding mechanisms remain subject to decisions on the Airports Act (2014) cost recovery regulations.

Ministry of Transport OC Number: OC241051

Airports Act cost recovery regulations

11. Targeted consultation on cost recovery regulations under the Airports Cost Recovery Act (2014) closed on 28 August 2024.

s 18(d)

s 9(2)(h)

For noting – Dunedin Airport

16. Agencies have been contacted by Dunedin Airport, who have had some recent media activity regarding the yet-unannounced re-establishment of international services to Dunedin Airport. In this email, Dunedin Airport clarified that while they are not ready to make an official announcement yet, they intend to do so on Monday 16th September. This is expected to announce new services between the Gold Coast and Dunedin, in partnership with Jetstar Airways, Gold Coast Airport, and the Queensland State Government. Ministers' offices will be provided with key reactive messages to support the announcement.
17. This is the first communication agencies have received with respect to restarting international services at Dunedin Airport, and agencies have been asked to keep this in strict confidence until an official announcement is made. Agencies will collaborate with each other and with Dunedin Airport, to give effect to regulatory requirements.

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE



Annex One: Summary timeline of key decisions and milestones.

Key	key decision	key milestone
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	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025
WRAL / Jetstar	8 and 18 July Agency on-site workshops ●	7 August letter of intent received from JetStar ●	JetStar announcement 9/10 September ●									02/06/2025 WRAL site operationally ready ● 16/06/2025 New international services start ●	
s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 18(d)													
Border Processing Levy Consultation	Cabinet approves public consultation Public consultation ●	Dept/ Ministerial consultation ●	Cabinet approves development of regulations ●			New levies come into force ●							
s 9(2)(f)(iv), s 18(d)													

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982