

Submission to the Airways Ltd Auckland Tower Replacement October 2022

The New Zealand Aviation Federation (NZAF) appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to Airways on this capital project. We represent General Aviation in NZ and have members who are involved in recreational, private, business, and commercial operations. Auckland Airport ATC is not a major factor for many of our users, but we do have a genuine interest in how Airways conducts its business and how that impacts in the whole process of air navigation in the NZ FIR.

My comments are made with the knowledge and information gained through nearly 10 years involvement in the New Southern Sky program (NSS) and four decades of GA activities which included use of NZAA for private international departures & arrivals and in the construction, industry working on projects at several airports both domestic and international. They are general comments rather than specific and intended to provide a holistic view rather than one from any particular industry perspective.

I am also involved in and part of the aviation reference group for the Air Navigation System review that is currently underway. Whilst having high regard for Airways operations, I have very definite ideas on the need for the review and a strong belief in the need to change the operating model of our ANSP to reflect the importance of aviation as part of the essential Transport Infrastructure of New Zealand.

Having said that I make the following comments that I hope are of some use to your project.

Response to Q1

Do you have any feedback on the Auckland ATC Tower replacement options outlined?

The options are well laid out and clear.

Q2.

Do you have any feedback on Airways preferred approach for the replacement of the Auckland ATC Tower?

Through my involvement in NSS I was aware of the intention to install a digital tower in Invercargill with the benefit of gaining experience and learnings from that operation. We had several presentations on the concept but were also made aware that it was leading edge technology that was involved. I agreed with that proposal and considered it worthwhile to give confidence and to validate the installation of a digital tower in NZAA.

That did not proceed due to Covid, so the experience has not been gained. To me that makes any idea of installing a digital tower as the primary means of ATC at Auckland fraught with danger. The proposal for a Hybrid tower of 35 M height and serving just the existing southern runway therefore would appear to be the most logical proposal where we can

have conventional and digital towers working contemporaneously, gaining valuable knowledge for when the Northern runway becomes a reality.

Q3

Do you have any feedback on the changes highlighted to the Capital Plan in 5.1?

The basic fact is that we must have a tower in Auckland to continue with the safe operations that are a vital part of our New Zealand economy. The cost is what it will be, and we rely on Airways to undertake the project efficiently and speedily. This is just essential "Transport Infrastructure" to service New Zealand incorporated. It should be treated as any other infrastructure project and costed over all the users. If there is to be any debate in the Capital Plan it will be to question "who are the users".

The short answer of course is to just get on with it using the option as described in Q2.