

WELLINGTON
AIRPORT



WELLINGTON AIRPORT
KAITIAKITANGA REPORT 2024



WELLINGTON

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Taking care of our people, our community and the environment is fundamental to how we operate as an airport.

Our Kaitiakitanga philosophy embeds this responsibility into everything we do.

We have a range of ambitious targets to focus our work where we can make the best impact. Many of these targets are independently assessed, with progress reported on and regular updates published to drive accountability.

That is the purpose of this annual Kaitiakitanga Report – to highlight our achievements over the last year, and update on the journey ahead.

Reducing our environmental footprint is vital given the importance of air travel to Wellington and the wider region. In a typical year we host six million travellers, connecting families and businesses and delivering enormous economic and social benefits.

We have made good progress over the last year and are tracking well towards net zero emissions for our own operations. We are now on track to achieve this in 2028, two years ahead of schedule, which is very pleasing. However, there is no getting around the fact that air travel creates emissions.

That is why we are working closely with airlines and aircraft manufacturers towards our collective long-term mission to decarbonise aviation.

We are proud that independent assessment shows we are among the most sustainable airports in the world, but there is still more work to be done.

This report outlines how we are tracking so far based on three key areas: our environment, our community and our people.

Wellington Airport rated fifth best in the world for airport sustainability

We are proud to have scored highly again for sustainability in an independent global assessment last year, rated fifth in the world amongst participating airports.

The assessment was carried out by GRESB who rate the performance and management of environmental,

social and governance (ESG) efforts of companies worldwide each year.

In 2023, Wellington Airport scored 96 out of 100 and a five-star rating, achieving ‘sector leader’ status. Overall, we were rated 85th out of 681 entities across a range of industries.





Our targets for 2030¹

NET ZERO

emissions for our direct operations

30% REDUCTION

in absolute emissions for our direct operations

30% REDUCTION

in waste sent to landfill and water use

Reducing our emissions

Reducing the emissions created by our own operations is a key priority and we are making good progress with a 27% reduction since 2017.²

Progress over the last year includes:

- All our airside vehicles are now electric and/or hybrid (except the larger Airport Fire Station vehicles).
- New LED airfield lighting with greatly improved energy efficiency.
- We are actively investigating renewable energy generation opportunities, including solar.

Climate change is here now, and the impacts are expected to intensify in the coming years. This is why we are continuing to gather and update information on likely physical changes and transition risks to inform strategic decisions.

Last year we released our first climate-related disclosures, highlighting the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate. This provides transparency on our governance, strategic and risk management processes to manage climate-related risks and opportunities.

We voluntarily published this report, one year ahead of legal requirements, to demonstrate to investors and the public our urgency in addressing these issues.

We are now in a position to build on this knowledge and release a formal transition plan later this year.

We have added a new layer of accountability by signing a commitment letter with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), the first step in having an independently validated emissions target. The SBTi is a global body that independently assesses and approves companies' targets to ensure they are in line with a 1.5-degree future.

As the next step, Wellington Airport has submitted our target of net zero emissions by 2030 for our own operations (a 90% reduction compared to 2017), and absolute zero emissions by 2050 to be assessed by the SBTi.

This process is important because it ensures our targets are credible and that we are accountable for our progress.

1. From a 2017 baseline
2. Based on FY23 emissions



We have a clear plan to reach net zero for our own direct operations:

- Tracking against transparent, science-based targets.
- Reducing overall energy use by 30% by 2030.
- Improving the efficiency of heating, cooling and lighting systems.
- Prioritise replacing our gas boilers and moving to 100% renewable energy sources.
- Replacing our vehicle fleet with electric vehicles.
- Offsetting any residual emissions.
- These measures (and more) will be finalised in our transition plan, due to be released later this year.

To add another layer of accountability, last year we converted \$100 million of existing bank facilities into sustainably linked loans. This means our lending will be charged a lower interest cost and line fee for achieving agreed sustainability goals, and a higher rate if those goals are not achieved.

We are prioritising emissions reductions to work towards a goal of absolute zero emissions by 2050, meaning no carbon output at all. We will avoid using offsets where possible and only use high-quality ones where required, with other co-benefits explored such as biodiversity and social benefits.

We are also following with interest research into coastal 'blue carbon' which has the potential to sequester carbon through marine ecosystems.



Achieving Level 2 Airport Carbon Accreditation



Wellington Airport has again achieved Level 2 Certification from the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) programme, recognising ongoing reductions in carbon emissions.

The ACA involves independent assessments of airports around the world, providing a benchmark of efforts to manage and reduce emissions.

Level 2 (Reduction) status is for airports with comprehensive emissions profile mapping and measurable reductions in place.

Our target now is to move up the levels of the ACA programme, reflecting our level of ambition for carbon reduction.





Adapting for the future

Adapting and preparing for climate change is also a key priority for Wellington Airport.

Our climate related disclosures outline how we are planning for physical risks such as storm surge and extreme weather events, along with adaptation strategies.

Future climate scenarios and projections are frequently considered when planning maintenance programmes, new developments and the design of airport infrastructure. We also regularly review and upgrade our stormwater capacity.

A major project over the next few years is renewing our seawall defences at the southern end of the airport which protect vital infrastructure against erosion and inundation.

Sea-level rise data shows that access to the airport via local roads is more likely to be at risk from flooding than the airport itself, given our runway is between four and twelve metres above sea-level. However, we are still planning flood modelling to inform future adaption and resilience projects given the increasing severity of rainfall events predicted for Wellington.

Decarbonising the wider aviation sector

There is no getting around the fact that air travel itself, rather than just airport operations, creates emissions and must be decarbonised.

The entire sector is working towards this goal which is vital given the importance of air travel to our society and economy. To this end, Wellington Airport is working closely with airlines to help them meet their own ambitious decarbonisation goals (both in the air and for their ground operations).

We are on the advisory body for electric aircraft manufacturer Heart Aerospace, helping them develop the next generation of aircraft. We were proud to host the first electric aircraft to cross Cook Strait in 2021 and are involved with Government working groups on sustainable aviation.

Two major challenges we have been highlighting are a reliable supply of renewable electricity to power electric flights and equipment, and progressing Sustainable Aviation Fuel options (including hydrogen) for longer haul flights in the longer term. We are connecting with parties working on this and regularly make submissions on government policy.

Hosting Air New Zealand's commercial demonstrator in 2026

We are proud to have been selected as a base airport for Air New Zealand's next generation commercial demonstrator aircraft.

The aircraft will be BETA's all-electric ALIA model and will operate a regular cargo service between Blenheim and Wellington.

NZ Post is the freight partner for this service which will be used as a test case for carrying post and packages between the North and South Islands with zero emissions.

We're excited for Wellington Airport to become New Zealand's hub for short haul electric flights. It makes sense given our geographic location, and our agile and innovative culture.

The lessons learned from this partnership will help both Air New Zealand and airports around the country prepare for the future of flying.



COMMITMENTS FROM AIRLINES USING WELLINGTON AIRPORT

Air New Zealand

- Reduce carbon intensity by 28.9% by 2030.
- Begin replacing turboprop fleet with next generation aircraft from 2030.
- Net zero emissions by 2050.

Qantas Group

- Reduce net emissions by 25% by 2030 from 2019 levels.
- Net zero emissions by 2050.



From left: Wellington Airport chief executive Matt Clarke, senior project manager Kate Grinlinton, AFS manager Ben Troy, Wellington Airport's GM aeronautical operations Ayolt Wiertsema and Nate Rowe from Taranaki Whānui.



Reducing wider emissions

We are working on publicly releasing our Scope 3 emissions profile for the first time later this year. This will cover emissions from our value chain (e.g. customers and suppliers) rather than directly created by the airport itself.

Scope 3 emissions often represent the largest source of emissions for companies. They also present us significant opportunities to influence emissions reductions across the value chain and focus efforts where they can have the greatest impact.

Some examples of how we are helping tackle these emissions include:

- Installing more electrical charging infrastructure airside to support electric vehicles and equipment used by airlines and ground handlers.
- Increasing the number of chargers for electric vehicles for tenants and rental car providers.
- Completed a new electric bus charging facility.

The all-electric Airport Express bus continues to be very popular with around 30,000 travellers per month, nearly double the original numbers expected.

HYDROGEN TRIAL

Hydrogen was trialed at Wellington Airport in February this year as an innovative power source for charging electric tugs and service vehicles.

The fuel cell is owned by Toyota New Zealand and uses hydrogen to generate electricity, with the supply coordinated by Hiringa Energy, a New Zealand-based clean energy company.

The trial is helping us assess the viability of hydrogen as an energy source and give insights into the operational challenges and opportunities. We continue to investigate the use of hydrogen as a fuel source switch for back-up power and ground transport, and eventually air travel.



Reducing construction emissions

Measuring the embodied carbon emissions from construction activity is a priority for Wellington Airport.

Embodied emissions are the emissions released throughout the life cycle of a product or service. This includes the emissions created during the manufacturing and transport stages of construction projects, and during the extraction and processing of the raw materials in the associated supply chains.

This is important for us because we have a pipeline of essential construction work underway to meet the increasing demand from travellers. We are working with our contractors and design partners on a methodology to quantify embodied emissions and reduce them throughout the projects.

As part of this, all new projects must include the requirement for an embodied carbon estimate in the contract.

As well as the Airport Fire Station project, embodied carbon emissions are being quantified by Fulton Hogan and HEB for their work on airfield maintenance and relocated car parks respectively.

With better visibility on material use across the airport campus we can also optimise materials on site.



NEW AIRPORT FIRE STATION UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Wellington Airport and Naylor Love are working closely together on this project to measure waste and recycling, manage site office food waste and recycling, and coordinate the donation of excess materials.

We have worked closely with the onsite team to develop the data and methodology for an accurate embodied carbon emissions assessment.

This is the first project in the Wellington Region that Naylor Love have implemented this level of assessment. Quantity surveyor Jarrod Collins says, "The data we are gathering for this project will help to tell a story of the carbon cost to construct the Fire Station. Our mutual learnings will be utilised across future projects for both Wellington Airport and Naylor Love. It's encouraging to see the airport implement this on their projects and be at the forefront of the sustainability movement."



Wellington Airport Community Garden

Our community garden is taking shape with composting and planting well underway.

This is helping divert waste from landfill, reducing emissions and helping grow food – a great example of the circular economy in action.

It's also a great asset for the community with a team of local volunteers helping us with regular working bees.

Approximately 84,000 coffee cups and 6,800 litres of food waste have been diverted from landfill to date.



Composting at the Wellington Airport Community Garden



Reducing waste to landfill and potable water usage

We are laying the groundwork for a 30% reduction in waste sent to landfill and water usage by 2030.³

Food waste from the terminal and Rydges Hotel is now being composted at our Community Garden (see page 15 for further information) and we are working with our retailers to further extend the use of compostable packaging. A recent waste audit highlighted numerous opportunities in this area.

New bins with clearer signage are being installed in the terminal to better sort and recycle our waste, and we are working with all operators to improve in this area.

We will soon be moving to a paperless system for car parking which will greatly reduce

the amount of paper and waste created by customers – around 3.8 million paper tickets per year. The paperless system has already been implemented in our long-term parking.

This year we are gathering detailed information on water use across the airport campus which will help us make informed decisions on the best projects to achieve our goal.

In the meantime, low-flow tap designs are being used for all new builds and retrofits.

This year we will also be reviewing our sustainability strategy and targets to ensure our waste and water targets remain ambitious, and that we have a clear pathway to achieving these targets by 2030.

RECYCLING BATTERIES AND AEROSOLS FOR COMMUNITY USE

Large amounts of batteries and aerosols are being rescued from the landfill thanks to the efforts of our Senior Firefighter Munny Munro and his 'Recycle Smart' scheme.

Airport fire fighters collect these products discarded by passengers from Aviation Security on a regular basis. The batteries are then donated to local schools while the hair sprays and deodorants go to musical theatre groups and the Royal New Zealand Ballet. It's a win-win for the environment, for reducing our waste, and for local community groups.

We are also improving signage around what can and can't be taken on flights to reduce the amount of goods being discarded by travellers.



3. From a 2017 baseline



Supporting local biodiversity

Wellington Airport forms a barrier between the predator-free Miramar peninsula and the rest of Wellington which has similar aspirations.

We are proud to support Wellington's biodiversity by supporting and partnering with local groups who support these efforts in a variety of ways. These include Predator Free Wellington, Trees that Count, Te Motu Kairangi, and Capital Kiwi.

We have a dedicated Wildlife Officer who works to keep birds away from the runway, and in particular control black-backed gulls that can be a threat to certain native species' chicks.

The health of our oceans is also important to us. We have supported local charity Mountains to Sea who deliver inspiring marine education programmes, and are investigating the potential of blue carbon – using ocean seaweed as a tool for absorbing carbon dioxide.

TRANSPLANTING LIZARDS TO A SAFER HOME

Over 1200 northern grass skinks and two Raukawa geckos were carefully relocated from a hillock at Wellington Airport last year to a new home on protected sites at Moa Point and around the Miramar Peninsula

The rehoming was required due to the land being developed as part of a joint project with Wellington City Council involving construction of the council's new Sludge Minimisation Facility.



Penguin visitor rescued from Wellington Airport runway



Wellington Airport is used to flying visitors on the runway but had an unusual flightless guest earlier this year – a kororā (little blue penguin) which had to be rescued by our staff.

The little intruder was reported by an Air Chathams pilot waiting to take off on Friday January 12th. The pilot and passengers waited patiently while Wellington Airport's airside staff collected the penguin (nicknamed Manu) and took him to Wellington Zoo to recover.

The story made global headlines with coverage in the BBC, New York Post and the Guardian among others. We are pleased to report our little friend recovered well and has since been released back into the wild.



OUR PEOPLE



WELLINGTON AIRPORT

OUR PEOPLE



Looking after our people creates a great culture that attracts and retains highly skilled personnel.

As a workplace we have put a lot of effort into our staff wellbeing programme known as the Hauora Hub. The focus is to positively impact employees' taha tinana (physical wellbeing), taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing) and taha whānau (social wellbeing).

To support this we run a series of fun monthly events that help build team cohesion and a sense of belonging across different teams. In the last year these have included snorkelling, painting, cooking, mini golf and axe throwing.

Some of the other benefits we provide our staff with include:

- A competitive market salary with the inclusion of some targeted bonus payments.
- Flexible working practices and conditions.
- Free car parking and Airport retail discounts.
- Regular social events and team lunches.
- Rewards systems to recognise achievement and effort.
- Learning and development opportunities
- Free gym and twice weekly F45 fitness sessions
- Free eye checks and annual flu vaccination, and discounted health insurance.

The results of this can be seen through our highest ever engagement score of 88%, an 11.5% increase on previous years.

We also offer generous parental leave well over and above what is required by law. This includes 100% salary top up (inclusive of Government payment) for up to 18 weeks, continuation of KiwiSaver and annual leave accumulation while on leave, and two weeks paid partner leave.



WELLINGTON AIRPORT HAS ACHIEVED ITS HIGHEST EVER STAFF ENGAGEMENT SCORE OF 88%



Diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion at Wellington Airport continues to flourish.

We have a staff ratio of 30 females to 70 males and at Board level this is 50:50. We continue to attract a good balance of candidates from a range of ethnic backgrounds and genders.

Gender pay equity and the gap between women and men's pay is a big focus in many New Zealand workplaces including Wellington Airport. We treat this issue with importance and pride ourselves on a proactive and transparent approach to pay gap data collection, analysis and reporting.

We proactively measure and publish this pay gap data in an annual diversity report publication, our annual report, website and through Mind the Gap – one of New Zealand's first pay gap registries.

WIAL's median gender pay gap for December 2023 is 5%, compared to the national median of 8.6%. This is down from 10.6% in 2022 which shows we are moving in the right direction.

We are continuing to develop our diversity and future leadership talent pool. A number of our female staff have been earmarked for spots on the Global Women in Leadership programme, Aspiring Women Leaders programme and Melbourne School of Business's management programmes.

Health and safety

Best practice health and safety processes are an integral part of our operations and will always be our number one priority.

Under the Civil Aviation Authority's safety rules, we are required to achieve and maintain a Safety Management System which aligns with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and meets all safety regulations.

Looking after the mental health of our people is also a priority. We run an annual Mental Health Awareness week with a range of activities including yoga, a beach walk and guest speakers. We even gave away free mullets in the terminal this year to help raise awareness and money for the Mental Health Foundation.

We are proud to have scored highly for passengers feeling safe and secure in a recent survey. This was run as part of a global airport passenger satisfaction and performance survey last year in which we scored 4.37 out of five for this category.



Wellington is our home and we're proud to support our community in a variety of ways.



We sponsor some of the most iconic events on Wellington's calendar, helping make our city vibrant and fun for locals and visitors alike. These include:

- Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts
- Visa Wellington on a Plate
- World of WearableArt (WOW) Show
- Beervana
- CubaDupa
- Fringe Festival
- Wellington Jazz Festival
- Te Papa exhibition partner

We also provide promotional support to dozens of Wellington events including:

- Tākina exhibitions
- Māoriland Film Festival
- Wellington Pride Festival
- Matariki events
- Experience Wellington
- National Library
- Katherine Mansfield Centenary

A regular highlight is the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards which will celebrate their 20th anniversary this year.

These awards are organised in collaboration with local councils to recognise the work of volunteer

groups in the categories of Arts and Culture, Education and Child/Youth Development, Health and Wellbeing, Heritage and Environment, and Sport and Leisure, as well as a Rising Star award and People's Choice category.

Supreme Award winners for 2023 were Everybody Eats, a charitable dining concept on a mission to reduce food waste, food poverty and social isolation in Aotearoa. Volunteers help Everybody Eats to transform rescued food into three-course set menu dinners which are served at their restaurants on a koha basis.

Our Cystic Fibrosis Christmas Tree festival in December is another regular highlight, creating a spectacular forest in the terminal while raising awareness and funds for this important cause.

We regularly support good causes in the terminal, including hosting a parade for Special Olympians and promoting the 2024 World Wheelchair Rugby Paralympic Qualification Tournament. Recently we've supported the Life Flight Trust Open Day and the relocation of kiwi to Wellington by Capital Kiwi.

Other special events we supported include Pink Shirt Day, White Ribbon Day, Movember, National Volunteer Week and reinvigorating the Courtenay Place precinct.

In 2024 we were also proud to be a silver sponsor and participate in the Wellington Pride Parade, celebrating diversity and culture in all different forms.



Being a good neighbour

Supporting and communicating with our neighbours is a priority for us.

We now employ a full-time Community Relations Officer who keep locals informed on relevant airport happenings through a variety of methods including:

- A quarterly community newsletter
- A weekly email update
- Letters and door knocking
- Public meetings and surveys on projects like our seawall redevelopment
- Our website and social media

In collaboration with the local community, the WLG Community and Environment Fund provides funding grants to mitigate any adverse impacts associated with airport operations.

This is open to organisations and community groups within Motukairangi/Eastern Ward for the purposes of education, promotion and advancement of the community. Last year 14 local organisations received grants, the details of which are available [here](#).

Every year we award five local high school students \$1,000 scholarships in the annual Wild at Heart Spirit Awards. These awards recognise and celebrate students who have gone above and beyond to provide service to their school and community.

Other local causes we support include:

- Life Flight Trust
- Local surf lifesaving clubs
- New Zealand Red Cross Refugee Services
- Wellington Boardriders
- Wellington Regional Surf Championships (held next to the airport at Lyall Bay)
- Wellington Saints, Wellington Phoenix and the Hurricanes

We often host schools for airport visits and regularly have local musical groups performing in the terminal. The Airport Fire Service have also been great ambassadors for the Airport at numerous local events and parades.



Managing noise

Wellington Airport is handily located just five kilometres from the CBD, but this location also creates challenges in that we are surrounded by residential areas.

This means noise is an issue, and we are careful to operate within the noise limits and curfew conditions set by the airport purposes designations. These are provided for in the Wellington City Council's Operative and Proposed District Plans.

The Wellington Airport Noise Management Committee oversees our compliance with this plan and with the noise-related conditions of the airport purpose designations. The committee meets quarterly and works collaboratively with the airport, airlines, local residents and City Council representatives.

Last year we updated our Air Noise Management Plan which guides our approach to mitigating noise issues, providing for the ongoing operation and growth of the Airport while minimising the effects of aircraft and airport noise on the surrounding community.

Late in 2022 some departure flight paths out of Wellington were changed by Airways with the approval of Wellington Airport. This has reduced delays and emissions and improved safety, but some residents in the northern suburbs have been impacted by increased noise.



As a result, Wellington Airport and Airways commissioned expert noise modelling with four noise monitors placed in different suburbs. The results were released in late 2023 and we are now discussing potential next steps with a local representative group.

We run the Quieter Homes programme to provide noise insulation and ventilation to eligible houses within our Air Noise Boundary. Over the last year we've completed one upgrade approximately every three weeks.

Over the last 20 years the overall noise generated by the airport has significantly declined, even as activity has increased, thanks to major investments by airlines and the airport. Changes in aircraft technology, for example, have seen new generations of aircraft that are up to 30% quieter.

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