

**DRAFT JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT:  
AIRWAYS INTERNATIONAL AND TĀWHAKI JOINT VENTURE**

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## **Collaboration boosting capability through uncrewed traffic management tech**

CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND, 17 SEPTEMBER 2024: Aotearoa New Zealand is taking further steps to advance uncrewed aircraft operations and be at the leading edge of airspace integration with the deployment of the AirShare uncrewed traffic management (UTM) system at Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre.

Implementing the UTM system developed by Airways at the multi-use facility near Christchurch marks the completion of the first phase of a collaboration agreement between the two organisations to help advance the fast-growing aerospace sector in New Zealand.

AirShare enables Tāwhaki to facilitate all uncrewed aircraft operations at the centre, through its flight information management system (FIMS) and uncrewed aircraft services including flight authorisations, and pilot communications. AirShare also enhances situational awareness by providing a picture of airspace activity at and around Tāwhaki.

Advanced UTM features will be trialled at the centre, with input from operators, Tāwhaki and Airways to gather data on how UTM supports the development of a modern, safe airspace that serves all users.

Airways International Head of Products Justine Whitfield says: “We’re pleased to have already completed the first joint project with Tāwhaki under our collaboration agreement, with AirShare going live.

“We’re looking forward to working with different operators to inform the role of UTM in Aotearoa New Zealand, supporting future scalability and the safe integration of emerging technologies in the airspace system.”

Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre at Kaitorete is recognised as one of the world’s best locations for aerospace with vast, unpopulated landscape, clear skies and seas just 50 minutes’ from Ōtautahi Christchurch CBD.

Tāwhaki Head of Aerospace Stan Topping says the rollout of the AirShare UTM will not only benefit its customers but the wider sector as a whole.

“Collaborating with Airways and utilising their UTM system is a great addition to the digital infrastructure we provide for testing, developing and operating new aerospace technologies at the Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre. Not only will it enhance our operators’ experience, it will also generate crucial insights for innovators, policy makers and regulators.

“This will help inform what’s required from a modern airspace system to realise the benefits of advanced aviation in Aotearoa and around the world – from sustainable, cost-effective transportation to connecting remote communities and disaster responses.”

AirShare was previously used at Tāwhaki as part of the world-first successful beyond visual line of sight flights led by Wisk Aero to safely integrate an uncrewed aircraft into unsegregated controlled airspace. This was in partnership with government and industry partners including Airways.

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**For further enquiries or visual media requests, please contact:**

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**EDITORS' NOTE:**

**About Airways International**

[Airways International](#) is the commercial arm of Airways New Zealand – providing UTM, training, ATC simulation, digital solutions, aeronautical information management, procedure design and aviation consultancy services globally to air navigation service providers (ANSPs), airlines and airports. AirShare UTM supports air navigation service providers and other airspace managers to safely and efficiently manage uncrewed traffic; enhancing situational awareness and reducing ATC workloads through digitisation.

Airways is New Zealand's air navigation service provider, safely managing more than 500,000 flights through one of the world's largest airspaces.

**About Tāwhaki**

[Tāwhaki Joint Venture](#) is a partnership between the New Zealand Government and mana whenua (indigenous people) for Kaitorete – Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Wairewa Rūnanga. Tāwhaki weaves together mātauranga Māori (indigenous knowledge), research, science, cutting-edge aerospace technology and environmental rejuvenation for the benefit of our people and planet.

It established the Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre at Kaitorete, a multi-use facility supporting a wide breadth of aerospace activities including advanced aviation, engine testing, weather balloon deployment and horizontal space launch. The site just outside Ōtautahi Christchurch boasts a sealed runway, hangar facilities, drone areas and digital infrastructure, and is scaling up for vertical launch and renewable energy.