



T?WHAKI NATIONAL AEROSPACE CENTRE PROVIDES MISSION-CRITICAL BOOST FOR AEROSPACE SECTOR

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Aotearoa has reinforced its place in the global aerospace industry with the opening of the T?whaki National Aerospace Centre and new sealed runway at Kaitorete. New infrastructure coupled with technical support will super charge Aotearoa fast-growing aerospace sector and help meet international demand. Domestic and international companies are already testing and trialling leading-edge technologies at Kaitorete, a short 50-minute drive from ?tautahi Christchurch CBD and now more crafts and companies can take flight.

US-based Wisk Aero recently conducted its world-first airspace integration test flights for an uncrewed aircraft from Kaitorete and Dawn Aerospace and Kea Aerospace will now be able to conduct horizontal space launches and stratospheric flights from the site. New 1-kilometre runway and planned hangar facilities were funded by a \$5.4 million grant from the New Zealand Government's Regional Strategic Partnership Fund, administered by Kōwhiri. This joins a sealed taxiway and fuel pad, grass runway, vertiport, office facilities and data connections.

Tōwhaiti Board Member David Perenara-O'Connell stated: "To fully enable the sector, supply chains and realise the economic benefits for all New Zealanders, takes a collaborative approach. We're grateful for the support of our government, local authorities, regulators, aerospace partners, research and science communities, and suppliers who share our vision of a world-leading hub for innovation and exploration. We believe that this mission is truly unique. The way in which we weave together mātauranga Māori (indigenous knowledge) with cutting-edge innovation in aerospace and environmental rejuvenation, marks a new era in sustainable land use."

Tōwhaiti Chief Executive Linda Falwasser commented: "We have one of the world's best locations for aerospace and space launch and we're prioritising critical infrastructure alongside rejuvenation of this special whenua (land). This includes exploring solar power and green hydrogen production and storage on site. We have received strong global demand for a site that delivers technically while holding steadfastly to its values of protecting and preserving our people and planet."

Dawn Aerospace Co-Founder James Powell, said: "Having this key infrastructure so accessible is hugely enabling for the whole sector. It will be transformative to the development of our rocket-powered aircraft, the Mk-II Aurora."

Kea Aerospace CEO Mark Rocket said Tōwhaiti is enabling an exciting future for the region and the country: "Kaitorete is situated in an ideal location for aerospace research and development and offers Kea Aerospace unique opportunities for flight testing and operations of our solar-powered stratospheric aircraft."

Aotearoa is one of the top countries for space launches and aerospace testing and trialling, with an advanced and responsive regulatory environment, sparse population and low air and sea traffic.

Kaitorete offers clear skies and access to a wide range of orbits from an expansive, unpopulated, flat strip of land 25km long, nestled between Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) and the Pacific Ocean. Its proximity to world-class universities, international air and seaports and advanced manufacturing capabilities in nearby Ōtautahi Christchurch is globally unique.

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