



# MERLIN ANNOUNCES NEW ZEALAND AS TEST ENVIRONMENT TO PROGRESS THE FUTURE OF AUTONOMY

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**Merlin opens of its center for operations in Kerikeri, New Zealand. With this facility, Merlin is now equipped with a dedicated test environment to support further technological development and certification activities of its New Zealand-based Cessna Caravans that underpin the capability, safety, and effectiveness of its autonomous flight technology. Merlin has also partnered with Freightways New Zealand to deliver freight to northern New Zealand, creating a multi-purpose facility that provides substantial and invaluable first-hand experience in freight carrier operations.**

Putting regional facilities in place enables Merlin to meticulously evaluate its equipment and technology. The testing completed in New Zealand and the corresponding learnings will guide future development decisions to be implemented worldwide, ensuring in-air operability and

certification with FAA and Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand.

Shaun Johnson, CEO of Merlin New Zealand, commented: “Before autonomous flight can scale, we must conduct a considerable amount of prerequisite work. As a birthplace of aviation innovation, New Zealand has more than 100 years of history-making work. It’s exciting to have Merlin’s best-in-class capabilities here and put them to the test. Our talented team is devoted to ensuring a more resilient air network continues to safely grow globally. With this new facility, we now have the infrastructure needed to modify aircraft with the Merlin Pilot while simultaneously running freight operations in support of rural New Zealand.”

This testing facility puts Merlin at the forefront of autonomous flight innovation, providing ample opportunity to increase its technical maturity. With a test, learn, and iterate approach, this center for operations will rapidly increase Merlin’s progress to scale the future of autonomy. To date, Merlin has conducted over 500 autonomous flights.

The Merlin New Zealand facility in the Bay of Islands includes an aircraft hangar, maintenance workshops, and office space. The primary focus in New Zealand is the advanced development of Merlin technology and certification activities. When possible, this facility is also available to support broader New Zealand aerospace activities, including a recent New Zealand Defence Force parachute training school deployment to the region. Additionally, Merlin’s first test aircraft were deployed in recent weeks to assist in the regional flood relief efforts, showcasing Merlin’s commitment to supporting the community in which it works while simultaneously advancing its technical capabilities.

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