

Questions and Answers

1. *What does airport authority status mean?*

Airport authority status provides for a range of powers and responsibilities under New Zealand legislation. Of particular note, it allows:

- The Airport to make its own bylaws (which must be approved by government).
- Compulsory acquisition of land (but only with approval from the Minister of Lands).
- The ability to apply to the Minister for the Environment for requiring authority status under the Resource Management Act. Among other things, requiring authority status allows it to give notice to a local authority (the Council) to designate land under the district plan.

2. *What does requiring authority status mean?*

If requiring authority status is granted, the Airport could seek that the Auckland Unitary Plan make particular provision for the Airport and its protection through the notice of requirement/designation process under the Resource Management Act. It could, for example, seek to have noise controls imposed through the Plan on land surrounding the Airport to restrict some noise sensitive activities (such as residential housing) from being readily established near the Airport. Through the same process, it could also seek impose controls on the height of trees or structures built near the Airport.

Under the notice of requirement process, a requiring authority serves a notice on the Council for a particular work, and the Council makes a recommendation back to the requiring authority. The requiring authority then decides whether to accept that recommendation or not. If the Council or any submitter is not happy with the decision of the requiring authority, they have the opportunity to appeal to the Environment Court. This is different from the resource consent process where the Council makes the decision and if the applicant or a submitter is unhappy, they have the right to appeal to the Environment Court.

The granting of airport authority status does not necessarily mean that the Airport will be granted requiring authority status.

3. *What is the decision making process?*

After consulting with affected stakeholders, the Ministry of Transport will provide advice to the Minister of Transport regarding the proposal. If the Minister decides to take the proposal forward, the final decision is made by Cabinet (government Ministers).

4. *Will this mean larger aircraft, and more airport noise?*

On its own, airport authority status does not change the number or size of aircraft permitted to use the Airport and surrounding airspace. However, airport authority status may support further development of the Airport, which could have the effect of attracting more aircraft.

Under the Auckland Unitary Plan, the Airport is not currently subject to any special restrictions in terms of noise.

5. *What are the airport's development plans?*

After gaining airport authority status, the Airport proposes to carry out feasibility studies on the best use of the Airport to serve the needs of the community in the future. It sees the granting of airport authority status as one of many steps that must be taken to secure future options and raise interest, awareness and investment to investigate and plan potential uses.

6. *Will the community be consulted on any future development plans if airport authority status is granted?*

Any significant development that may cause adverse effects are likely to be publicly notified, so that those affected by the proposal can make submissions. The decision to publicly notify is made by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

7. *Will flight paths change?*

Flight paths may change if the airport goes ahead with plans to develop a new runway. The effect of aircraft noise will likely need to be taken into account as part of a resource consent process.