

Airport improvements rolling out big time

Following the peak summer travel period, we're kicking-off a significant number of improvement projects around the airport, including grooving the runway, car parking and traffic flow improvements as well as launching the new park & ride offering for a 12-month trial period – more on this inside.

First, I want to thank you for your patience and co-operation while we complete these works. They will be ongoing for the next three months, but will provide great benefits for staff and visitors alike once completed – not least of which is reintroducing the 2-minute public drop-off zone just outside the terminal before the peak winter season.

In terms of addressing wider transport, parking and road infrastructure issues, we're working closely with the Queenstown Lakes District Council, NZ Transport Agency and Otago Regional Council as a member of the region's transport governance group. It is excellent to see these organisations actively working together to deliver a number of key initiatives to improve transport and road infrastructure across the district.

The team has also been busy over at Wanaka Airport. We recently purchased a large parcel of land adjacent to the airport, adding to the land we acquired late last year. Regardless of the outcome of the District Council's current governance process, these land acquisitions will go a long way to safeguarding the opportunity for the future growth of Wanaka Airport, the local communities and broader region.

Another exciting announcement is that NASA will once again be flying a super pressure balloon over our great southern skies. We have been working with NASA on the logistics for its third balloon launch from Wanaka Airport as well as securing a long-term arrangement that puts Wanaka firmly on the map as one of NASA's global balloon launch sites.

Finally, while summer seems to have taken a bit of a holiday this year, our high profile visitors certainly haven't! It was terrific to have folks like Oprah Winfrey, Reese Witherspoon and Mindy Kahling jet in to film and enjoy our amazing region. It was also a privilege to welcome the Prime Ministers of New Zealand and Australia when they visited Queenstown for their annual bilateral talks.



Many thanks to all of the individuals and agencies who worked so well together to make their experience at Queenstown Airport a safe, friendly and seamless one.

Take care and stay safe.

Colin
Chief Executive



February passenger numbers

Passenger numbers for February compared to the same period last year.

161,669

Total passengers ▲ 9%

123,401

Domestic passengers ▲ 9%

38,268

International passengers ▲ 7%

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NASA's Super Pressure Balloon...

- Is 114.5m (375.6ft) in diameter and 69m (226ft) high when fully inflated
- Weighs 2,377kg when fully inflated (similar size to Dunedin's Forsyth Barr Stadium)
- Will rise at approximately 300m (1,000ft) per minute
- Can travel to 33.5km (around 110,000ft)
- Can carry suspended payloads weighing up to 3,600kg (8,000 pounds)
- Is able to fly up to 42km (26 miles)

Wanaka land acquisition

We recently acquired Windermere Farm, a 43-hectare block of land located adjacent to Wanaka Airport. Next to the Wanaka Transport and Toy Museum and fronting State Highway 6, the land adjoins the runway to the north east of Wanaka Airport. This is in addition to our purchase of 106 hectares of land adjacent to the airport in December last year.

Best Business Award winners

Wanaka Airport was crowned 'Best Business' at the Ignite Wanaka Chamber of Commerce Business after Six networking event in February. The accolade, awarded monthly, recognised the work done to secure Wanaka as a long term balloon launch site for NASA.

The 10-year arrangement was negotiated by our commercial manager Mark Samways on behalf of Wanaka Airport and the airport owner QLDC.

What's up in Wanaka?



▲ NASA's Super Pressure Balloon

Wanaka Airport confirmed as NASA balloon launch base for next 10 years

After two successful launches in 2015 and 2016, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) has confirmed that it will return to Wanaka Airport for its third super pressure balloon launch, scheduled for late March/early April, and will commit to the site as one of its global launch bases for up to 10 years.

Queenstown Airport worked with NASA to secure Wanaka as a long-term launch location in its capacity as the contracted manager of Wanaka Airport. The agreement makes Wanaka part of a select global group of NASA test sites located in the United States, Sweden, Australia and Antarctica.

The agreement has paved the way for NASA to invest in a longer term base of operations and it is building a dedicated

launch pad to the north-east of the airport for the 2017 launch.

This year's focus will be two-fold – NASA will be further testing the capabilities of its super pressure balloon in near space and will fly the Extreme Universe Space Observatory (EUSO-SPB) scientific payload on behalf of the University of Chicago.

EUSO-SPB is a high-energy cosmic ray particle astrophysics payload that will test a fluorescence detector and its supporting technologies under the severe operating conditions of the stratosphere. This suborbital flight is a precursor for a mission being planned to launch the EUSO telescope and install it on the International Space Station.

Various New Zealand aviation bodies, including Wanaka and Queenstown airports, Airways New Zealand and the Civil Aviation Authority, have been involved in helping NASA work through the logistics of launching the balloon from Wanaka Airport. A range of local agencies, from QLDC to fire brigades, have also provided planning, logistics and communications support.

Over the past two years, the project has brought significant economic benefits to both Wanaka and New Zealand with at least US\$2.5 million being injected directly into the regional and national economy.



For more information and progress reports on the launch check out www.wanakaairport.com and 'like' Wanaka Airport's Facebook page.

SAFETY MATTERS

A huge thank you to our airport community for your patience and co-operation as we undertake extensive works around the terminal, car parks and roads. It's fantastic to see staff and contractors using the temporary walkways when moving around the airport and assisting our visitors to do the same – please keep up the good work! We know it's inconvenient right now but it's short-term pain for long-term gain.

Getting into the groove

Making the airport as safe and reliable as possible is of utmost importance to us.

We have worked hard to ensure that the airfield at Queenstown Airport meets the best international practices, codes and standards. Last year we completed an \$18 million project to widen and resurface our main runway, and now that it has 'cured', this month we will start work on the final stage of the airfield upgrade – a \$750,000 project to apply grooves to the runway. This is part our continuing investment to ensure the airport can serve the region well in all weather conditions.

Grooved runways are common around the world, particularly for large airports in the United States, Singapore and Australia where climate extremes require measures to increase surface friction. For Queenstown Airport the grooves will be particularly helpful for aircraft landing in wet weather.

The grooving process is expected to start in mid-March and will be completed at night



▲ 2016 runway widening. Credit: Glenorchy Air

over a six to eight-week period with no impact on flights or day-to-day operations of the airport. Work will finish by 6am each morning in time for normal operations to resume.

The works will begin at the Frankton end of the runway and progressively work away from the residential area. We do not expect there to be excessive noise or vibration from the works.

A 24-hour project hotline has been set up for any queries or concerns:
03 450 9229 (9am-5pm) or
027 226 3057 (5pm-9am).

More about the grooving process

Queenstown Airport will be the first airport in New Zealand to employ the 'trapezoidal grooving' technique which is now considered global best practice for grooving runways.

'Grooving' is a specialist skill where diagonal grooves are carved out across the runway surface enabling water to flow freely off the side.

The project will be led by Downer New Zealand, the construction team that completed our runway works last year.

Cardinal International Grooving and Grinding, a world-leading team of runway and roading 'groovers' with specialised equipment and training, is being brought in from the United States to complete the grooving.



Follow our Facebook page 'Queenstown Airport' for progress reports.

Car parking & traffic flow improvements

Stage 4 of our programme to improve traffic flow and increase car parking for visitors, staff working at the airport and the broader community is now well underway and will be completed before 30 June when the peak winter season kicks off.



Park & Ride trial

Details about each phase are available at www.queenstownairport.co.nz/transportupdates.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding the works, please don't hesitate to email Dannielle (our project manager) on Dannielle.Dendle@queenstownairport.co.nz or call 027 539 7541.

As announced in December, we will launch a 12-month park and ride trial by the end of April, subject to required consents and agreements.

Located on Brookes Rd (behind Mitre 10 Mega and Pak 'n' Save), the parking area will initially provide 150 parking spaces for those visiting the airport.

A convenient hop on/hop off shuttle service will take customers to and from the terminal. The Park & Ride offering will be priced at a rate lower than parking near the terminal.

We're co-ordinating the launch of the Park & Ride trial with QLDC and NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) to help facilitate the phasing out of car parking along SH6 by NZTA and the introduction of new parking restrictions along residential streets around the airport by QLDC.

This is a big programme of works and includes:	Date
50 extra car parks (In the staff car park by St John Ambulance building)	By 31 March
2-minute public drop-off zone (Reintroduced immediately outside the terminal)	By 30 June
New roundabout (Constructed inside the airport entrance)	April - June
New and expanded coach park area (At Chris Read Green)	March - June
Upgraded storm water drainage (Across the airport, particularly in flood-prone areas)	March - June

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VINTAGE AIRCRAFT TO STAR AT AIRLINE PIONEERS REUNION



A grand old lady of Queenstown's aviation history will return to the skies this April as part of a 70-year airline pioneers reunion.

With support from Queenstown Airport, the 1943 de Havilland DH89 Dominie ZK-AKY biplane, known as 'Tui', is being brought in from Mandeville to guest star at the reunion, which runs 7-9 April.

From the mid-50s to the early 70s, Dominies were the dominant aircraft used for scenic, scheduled and charter work at Queenstown Airport.

The 8-seater 'Tui' was built for the Royal New Zealand Air Force and was the last of its type to be based in Queenstown. Now fully restored for commercial operation, the plane is owned by the Croydon Aviation Trust in Mandeville and will offer public flights for \$75 a head during the reunion.

WHO'S COMING?

Over 120 people from around NZ are planning to attend the reunion, including former staff and family members from the original post-war airlines of Southern Scenic Air Services (SSAS), Ritchie Air Services, West Coast Airways, Tourist Air Travel (TAT), and the early Queenstown operations of Mount Cook Airline.

One local attendee will be Hank Sproull, long-time owner of Air Milford, who has been closely involved with the organisation of the reunion. With over 45 years' aviation experience, Hank is one of the longest serving members of the local general aviation community, starting his career in the '70s as an

apprentice engineer for Mt Cook Airline and going on to become a pilot.

At 62 years young, Hank still has fond memories of his "old days" as a young flyboy at the airport.



"It's been 70 years since Queenstown's first airline, SSAS, was founded and 60 years since the company introduced a scheduled Queenstown to Invercargill service, flying the Dominies.

"I was 18 when I first started working at Queenstown Airport and I was really lucky to get exposure to a variety of aircraft, from float planes to ski planes. It was great hanging out with the older more experienced pilots – they loved sharing their stories and really looked out for us young 'uns. There are quite a few coming to the reunion so I'm looking forward to catching up on old times," he said.



THE PROGRAMME

The reunion includes a Friday night get-together at the Air Milford hangar, public flights on Saturday/Sunday, and a Palm Sunday service at Frankton Presbyterian Church focussing on Queenstown aviation pioneers and paying tribute to those who died in early operations.

Ever wondered how the streets around Queenstown Airport got their names? They're all based on aviation pioneers...

LUCAS PLACE (SH6 TO REMARKABLES PARK): Named after Frederick Lucas, better known as 'Popeye'. 'Popeye' served with RAF Bomber Command and later commanded an RNZAF Transport Squadron in the Pacific. With ex-servicemen Bill Hewett and Barry Topliss, he formed Southern Scenic Air Services in 1947, pioneering freight, scenic charters, topdressing, scheduled passenger services, and supply drop flying.

TEX SMITH LANE (LANEWAY INTO GA PRECINCT): Legendary bush pilot Tex Smith MBE was the longest serving pioneer general aviation pilot in this area, clocking up over 23,000 hours. Although he was a man of few words, Tex was revered by the GA community - hence the inspiration for the name.

SIR HENRY WIGLEY DRIVE (MAIN ROAD INTO AIRPORT): Sir Henry "Harry" Rodolph Wigley was a pilot, entrepreneur and pioneer of NZ's travel and tourism industry who was well liked and respected nationwide. He became a flying instructor for the RNZAF, a fighter pilot, a businessman and an inventor – landing the first ski plane on the Tasman Glacier in 1955, a feat which became a part of Mt Cook's core tourism offering. He was also captain of the NZ ski team in 1936-37 and, after the war, led his company in establishing new ski-fields and facilities at Coronet Peak and Ohau.



DON'T MISS...

Weather permitting, the Dominie and 4 Cessnas, originally operated by the early airlines, will do a tribute fly-past over the Church and then over Queenstown on Sunday 9 April at around 10:30am.