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– editors please note: photographs are available upon request from NZ Airports
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Culture-building feature of 2022 NZ Airports Awards

A theme of culture-building was strongly evident in the high calibre of projects and initiatives acknowledged by the 2022 NZ Airports Awards.

Presented at a well-attended gala event hosted at the Ohakea Airbase on September 14 and sponsored by Beca, the evening saw an unprecedented 12 annual awards across the sector.

NZ Airports chief executive Kevin Ward said the highest levels of aspiration and professionalism were apparent throughout the entries.

“Winners displayed characteristics which would make any airport proud,” said Mr Ward.

“There were numerous models of excellence for the features the judges were looking for – including aviation safety, innovation, environmental sustainability, community and stakeholder engagement, and health and safety.

“The culture-building theme was notable this year in the areas of aviation safety, biosecurity, community engagement, health and safety at work, and working with airport stakeholders.

“It is particularly impressive that airports are taking a wide view of their role in the community and taking a leadership role in their regions and in promoting the national interest.”

The awards align with success factors for modern airports: community engagement; infrastructure; environmental sustainability; and commercial or non-aeronautical initiatives.

For each category of airport there is also an Airport of the Year which is a highly valued recognition from the sector of overall achievement.

Mr Ward said the airport sector had been particularly hard hit by travel downturns due to the pandemic and the impressive range of projects, despite these challenges, was testament to the sector’s determination to keep building best practices into their operations, to keep working for their communities and regions, and to keep the country connected by air.

The NZ Airports 2022 Award winners were:

- Large Airport Community Engagement – Auckland Airport, Park and Vax Project
- Medium Airport Community Engagement – Hawke’s Bay Airport, Biodiversity Week
- Small Airport Community Engagement – North Shore Aero Club, Rosmini College Open Day
- Large Airport Infrastructure – Christchurch Airport, Airport Pavement Maintenance Work
- Small Airport Infrastructure – Timaru Airport and Downer New Zealand, Partial Runway Reseal
- Large Airport Environmental Sustainability – Auckland Airport, Airport-wide Team of Biosecurity Champions

- Medium Airport Environmental Sustainability – Hawke’s Bay Airport, Sustainability Linked Loan with ASB Bank
- Large Airport Commercial and Non-Aeronautical – Auckland Airport, Business Trial of Rapid Antigen Testing
- Small Airport Commercial and Non-Aeronautical – Masterton District Council, Hood Aerodrome Master Plan
- Large Airport of the Year – Auckland Airport
- Medium Airport of the Year – Hawke’s Bay Airport
- Small Airport of the Year – Whanganui Airport

Note for Editors

There are three categories of airport membership within the New Zealand Airports Association (NZ Airports) and the annual awards are considered within each category to ensure very small airports aren’t competing against their much larger peers:

Large Airports – recording more than 2 million passengers per year*

Medium Airports – between 200,000 and 2 million passengers

Small airports – less than 200,000 passengers, including airports without regular scheduled passenger operations.

*Size categories are based on 2019 (pre-pandemic) passenger volumes.

Summary comments of the Judging Panel:

Airport of the Year Awards

Large Airport of the Year – Auckland Airport

Impressively taking on big projects with bold ambitions, Auckland Airport has delivered with superb attention to detail. It has not just acted as a good aviation business, but thought about the frontline workforces in a pandemic, about New Zealand’s biosecurity and about the communities it is situated among and who work on its campus. At a time when international travel was at its lowest, this airport made a significant contribution to the national interest.

Medium Airport of the Year – Hawke’s Bay Airport

Leadership, strategic focus and commitment across key issues that will affect the future of airports, particularly in regard to community engagement and sustainability, has been clearly demonstrated by Hawke’s Bay Airport. It took the issues of biodiversity and sustainability and brought them home – thinking globally and acting locally.

Small Airport of the Year – Whanganui Airport

During 2021-22 Whanganui Airport delivered an excellent aeronautical information service project that touched a number of important bases for all small airports, and went beyond NZ Airports’ traditional individual award categories. It provided excellent safety improvements on a number of fronts, it enhanced airport user collaboration and involvement, and it repurposed an existing iconic tower building. Whanganui Airport has strongly underpinned the future potential of its aviation community.

Community Engagement Awards

Large Airport Community Engagement – Auckland Airport, Park and Vax Project

Auckland Airport went far beyond just opening up its carparks as a convenient place for motorists to be vaccinated in this project. The airport provided staff volunteers, for example in traffic control, and removed potential barriers to participation by providing bus transport. It also applied innovative marketing to attract target populations and to ensure its communities knew where they could be vaxxed most easily.

Medium Airport Community Engagement – Hawke's Bay Airport, Biodiversity Week

Hawke's Bay Airport actively and effectively promoted a community biodiversity initiative, which it also sponsors. A significant natural area of the airfield itself was featured and every group the airport works with, including local iwi, were involved in some way. The live plant installations and displays were varied, attractive and interactive, and passengers and visitors were genuinely engaged and drawn into an educational experience.

Small Airport Community Engagement – North Shore Aero Club, Rosmini College Open Day

Capturing aviation enthusiasm in the community, this open day showed college students the vocational opportunities across the sector, built the students' self-confidence, and demonstrated the good will and community contribution from general aviation. As well as investing in the future of flying through this initiative, North Shore Aero Club continues to be active with other sectors of the community – particularly RSA clubs in the district – and is applauded for its grass-roots approach to being good neighbours.

Airport Infrastructure Project Awards

Large Airport Infrastructure – Christchurch Airport, Airport Pavement Maintenance Work

Ensuring safety on a complex construction site and employing innovative technology were among highlights of this project. The depth of embedded knowledge held by Christchurch Airport and its partners Fulton Hogan and AECOM shone through, along with a strong shared culture of getting the work done safely and thoroughly.

Small Airport Infrastructure – Timaru Airport and Downer New Zealand, Partial Runway Reseal

Impressive determination to keep Timaru Airport's runway operational throughout, despite weather setbacks, was illustrated in this initiative. Excellent levels of planning and collaboration were evident between the airport and contractor Downer – including minute-by-minute plans for the runway works. The innovations and variations which enabled reuse of the runway millings to add additional taxiways and apron areas, not to mention contributing to a local cycle trail, added significant value.

Environmental Sustainability Project or Initiative Awards

Large Airport Environmental Sustainability – Auckland Airport, Airport-wide Team of Biosecurity Champions

Going far further than what was strictly required of a business at the border – Auckland Airport's initiative embraced and implemented deep change to systems and work culture by thoroughly embedding biosecurity into its processes. This has also helped enhance the airport sector's relationship with border agencies, while protecting the national economy.

Medium Airport Environmental Sustainability – Hawke’s Bay Airport, Sustainability Linked Loan with ASB Bank

Early leadership and a deep commitment to sustainability were demonstrated in this Hawke’s Bay Airport initiative. It has taken on a loan which specifically comes with ambitious, measurable sustainability goals, and strict criteria and independent assessment of meeting those targets. The breadth and depth of the airport’s decarbonisation and sustainability plans is applauded, and the initiative is considered an exemplar for the sector.

Commercial and Non-Aeronautical Initiative Awards

Large Airport Commercial and Non-Aeronautical – Auckland Airport, Business Trial of Rapid Antigen Testing

This project was key to achieving a significant change in how workplaces limited the spread of COVID-19 in workforces during the pandemic. Auckland Airport believed there was a better way to perform workplace Covid testing and led from the front to prove that – scoping and supervising the trial and also sourcing and distributing RAT testing kits to other companies. The initiative brought credit to the aviation sector and delivered very significantly for workforces and New Zealand Inc.

Small Airport Commercial and Non-Aeronautical – Masterton District Council, Hood Aerodrome Master Plan

This initiative saw Hood Aerodrome, supported by Beca, demonstrate a thorough and highly professional process of long-term planning, with particular attention to community engagement of a diverse group of stakeholders. This “best practice” example of master planning is expected to provide long-term benefits to the airport and community, and support all of its business activities – including a popular air show, future aviation infrastructure needs and other commercial opportunities.

ENDS

No further comment from NZ Airports will be available.

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