

Media Release
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Aviation industry confirms start of new SMART Approach flight path trial, and end of all visual approaches by jet aircraft to Auckland Airport from the North

Auckland Airport, Airways New Zealand and the Board of Airline Representatives New Zealand (BARNZ) have today confirmed that from 1 September 2015:

- the trial of the third satellite-guided SMART Approach flight path to Auckland Airport from the North, Yellow U23, will commence; and
- all visual approaches by jet aircraft to Auckland Airport from the North will end.

The decision to trial the third satellite-guided flight path to Auckland Airport from the North was publicly announced by the aviation industry in December last year, following the trial and public consultation process for the first two SMART Approaches to Auckland Airport from the North. The details of the new trial were publicly announced in May 2015.

The decision to end all visual approaches by jet aircraft to Auckland Airport from the North was also publicly announced by the aviation industry in December last year. Visual approaches are considered to create more noise than instrument-based approaches to the airport. Wide-bodied jets, such as the B777, stopped flying visual approaches from the North in 2014.

BARNZ's executive director, John Beckett, says, "We can confirm that the trial of the third satellite-guided flight path from the North will continue for up to 12 months. The trial flight path can be used between 7am and 10pm by up to 10 aircraft per day. It will be used by Air New Zealand, Qantas, Jetstar, Emirates and Virgin aircraft. At the conclusion of the trial, aircraft will stop using the flight path and a draft report will be published for public consultation."

"Also, from 1 September 2015, narrow-body jet aircraft, like the A320, will no longer make visual approaches to Auckland Airport from the North. This means all visual approaches by jet aircraft to the airport from the North will stop," says Mr Beckett.

Airways New Zealand's chief operating officer, Pauline Lamb, says, "As we announced in May 2015, the new trial flight path is higher and its approach curve is wider than the SMART flight paths that were trialled in Auckland in 2012 and 2013. This is intended to reduce aircraft noise, use even less fuel and deliver benefits for the environment. It incorporates lessons from the first trial. This trial flight path will also enable us to distribute traffic across a variety of inbound routes. The end of visual approaches to the airport by all jet aircraft will also help to further reduce aircraft noise."

Auckland Airport's general manager aeronautical operations, Judy Nicholl, says, "The trial of the third satellite-guided flight path will evaluate aircraft performance; airspace management; operational benefits - including time, distance, fuel and carbon emission savings; noise monitor results; and public feedback. The aim of the trial is

to help the aviation industry to grow travel, trade and tourism in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner. This is essential given that Auckland Airport connects Auckland to the rest of New Zealand and the world through more than 420 flights every day.”

“We also want to thank the airlines for agreeing to stop all visual approaches to the airport. This is further proof of their commitment to work with Airways New Zealand and Auckland Airport to reduce the impact of aircraft noise on the community.”

More information about the trial flight path is available online at www.aucklandflightpathtrial.co.nz

ENDS

Attachment: Map of Yellow U23 SMART Approach flight path

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