Auckland ATC Tower Replacement Submission

Responses to Questions

Question One: Do you have any feedback on the Auckland ATC Tower replacement *options* outlined?

Virgin Australia commends Airways NZ on the work undertaken to explore all possible solutions to replace the ageing Auckland Air Traffic Control (ATC) Tower and agree that these options are appropriate.

As technology continues to evolve and the aviation industry heavily reliant on these improvements, digital replacement solutions should now be the preferred approach for the large majority of infrastructure. The costs associated with implementing digital solutions are high for initial roll out, however significantly reduce for subsequent roll outs.

Evidenced at many airports globally, digital technology does not reduce safety outcomes for operators, rather the benefits brought about additional features can provide safety enhancements.

Question Two: Do you have any feedback on Airways preferred approach for the replacement of the Auckland ATC Tower?

Similar to the feedback provided in question one, it is Virgin Australia's position that Option 3 – Digital Tower is the preferred solution for Airways NZ to progress, unless there is an immediate safety reduction presented. There is an opportunity for Airways NZ to be a world leader in introducing a digital tower at a large international airport, by demonstrating the technology works and is safe.

Question Three: Do you have any feedback on the changes highlighted to the Capital Plan in 5.1?

While the initial costs of introducing a digital tower are high, subsequent costs to further roll out across the country reduce.