

Aeromedical Commissioning Programme update – brought to you by the Air Ambulance Team

September 2024

Kia ora,

Welcome to the first edition of the new quarterly newsletter for the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme.

Since our last newsletter, we have established a new Air Ambulance Team, which covers both emergency air ambulance operations and the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme. We will keep in touch with the sector via this newsletter.

Overview of the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme

The Aeromedical Commissioning Programme aims to transform New Zealand's aeromedical service system to improve patient and community health outcomes.

Programme vision

The vision of the Programme is for equitable access to a high-performing aeromedical service that is safe, sustainable, and integrated to deliver excellent care. The Programme is guided by the Whakataukī: I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho – A problem is solved by continuing to find solutions

Alignment to the Government Policy Statement

The Programme is closely aligned to the Government Policy Statement (2024-2027) which has been recently issued. This focuses on access, timeliness, quality, workforce and infrastructure – which are all key priorities for this Programme. To read more, click [here](#).

Background to this work

The first phase of work was completed in 2019 which:

- Improved aviation safety through replacing single engine aircraft with twin engine helicopters.
- Consolidated emergency air ambulance helicopter providers from ten to three providers.
- Shifted focus from the provision of transport to aeromedical services with clinical Governance, operating under clinical oversight of their own medical director.
- Established dedicated clinical crewing.
- Established the National Air Desk, a 24/7 Dispatch and Coordination function for pre-hospital rotary wing transfers.

Second phase of work

The second phase of the Programme to deliver this transformation launched in 2022. The initial focus was on current state analysis and acquiring funding to replace the critically ageing helicopter fleet.

The current state analysis process has been completed and will inform the Programme design activity. Work is in progress to replace critically ageing helicopters across the country.

Design activity

We are now focused on facilitating the design of a high-level future operating model for the aeromedical sector. This is for pre-hospital events and interhospital transfers across both rotary wing and fixed wing resources, including Dispatch and Coordination.

Timeline

From September 2024 we expect to:

- Establish Design Working Groups to develop a draft high level future operating model.

From March 2025 we expect to:

- Consult on the draft high level future operating model with the broader sector.

From May 2025 we expect to:

- Seek approval from Health New Zealand and ACC for the draft future operating model.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives of the Programme are:

- **Health outcomes** – Transforming New Zealand’s aeromedical service to improve patient and community health outcomes.
- **Safety** – Improve aviation and clinical safety across the system
- **Equity** – Equity of access, experience and outcomes.
- **Efficiency** – High performing integrated services to drive clinical effectiveness and system efficiency.
- **Sustainability** – A predictable and sustainable funding and contracting model.

Design focus areas

A current state assessment of the aeromedical sector has been completed which informs the design activities for the Programme.

The assessment did not go into specific analysis of current providers, hospitals or regions. Rather, it highlighted overall focus areas for the design work. There are many lessons learnt and examples of good practice within the sector that can be built on over the next phase of the Programme.

The design work will focus on the following interrelated areas:

- Service model
- Investment and funding
- Assets and Infrastructure
- Dispatch and Coordination
- Workforce
- Data, technology, and information
- Governance



Clinical and Technical Advisory Group

We would like to introduce our Clinical and Technical Advisory Group, which includes representatives from across the aeromedical sector. You can read their biographies [here](#). The Clinical and Technical Advisory Group are technical and clinical experts, who advise and support the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme.

The group provides insight from across the aeromedical sector, advocates for efficient and effective outcomes, and champions the Programme. The group will operate in accordance with Te Mauri o Rongo - NZ Health Charter.

Design working groups

Design working groups will develop design solutions relating to the design focus areas listed above.

Membership of the design working groups will be recommended by the Clinical and Technical Advisory Group to ensure appropriate representation across the sector.

The design working groups will meet frequently from September through December 2024 to develop design solutions that will be shared with the Clinical and Technical Advisory Group and the wider sector for consultation.

Keeping you updated

There will be representative participation through the design working groups who can keep their networks up to date. There will also be an opportunity for wider engagement and consultation on the draft design in early 2025.

We will keep you updated with what is happening via this quarterly Newsletter as work progresses.

We will also have a new webpage dedicated to the Aeromedical Commissioning Programme which will provide updates and store newsletters.



Contact us

If you have any questions or feedback on this work please contact us by email: airambulanceteam@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz