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Commerce Commission

Via e-mail: infrastructure.regulation@comcom.govt.nz

CHRISTCHURCH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED (CIAL) – CROSS SUBMISSION ON AIRPORT INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AMENDMENT 2026 – DRAFT DECISIONS REASONS PAPER

Introduction

1 Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL) welcomes the opportunity to cross-submit on the Commission's draft decisions on additional information disclosure for airport major capital.

2 This cross-submission should be read in conjunction with CIAL's submission dated 23 July 2026 and the cross-submission of New Zealand Airports Association (NZAA), which CIAL supports.

3 No part of this submission is confidential.

4 CIAL continues to submit that Part 4 information disclosure (ID) and consultation under the Civil Aviation Act 2023 (CAA) perform distinct functions. ID enables assessment of Part 4 outcomes; CAA consultation enables substantial customers to test and influence proposed investment before a decision is made. Earlier disclosure should not turn ID into a parallel consultation or approval process.

5 This brief submission seeks to reinforce several matters that CIAL has submitted require amendment, to ensure that the regime remains practical, proportionate and aligned with existing regulatory processes.

Retain the 20% RAB Threshold

6 CIAL supports the Commission's 20% RAB threshold. It is objective, proportionate and scales with airport size. The fixed-dollar backstops proposed by airlines would be arbitrary, require periodic recalibration and duplicate scrutiny already available under CAA consultation and existing ID.

7 CIAL supports practical guidance on programme aggregation to prevent artificial fragmentation. The test should remain tied to projects with a genuine common or overlapping output. Projects should not be aggregated merely because they appear in the same master plan, share some enabling works or are delivered in the same pricing period.

Avoid a Rolling Disclosure Process

8 The timing problem identified by the Commission has not occurred at CIAL. CIAL provides substantial customers with detailed information on major capital projects, predominantly through pricing consultation, and proposals can, and have, changed materially in response.

9 CIAL's preferred approach remains disclosure with the next annual disclosure after the investment decision is confirmed. If the Commission retains the proposed early trigger, the final determination should make clear that the information is preliminary and should require an update only following a formal decision to reconsult on a significant or material change. It should not create a standing duty to monitor and republish each change in scope, cost, timing or assumptions.

10 The Commission should also clarify how it intends to use any proposed early disclosures and confirm that they do not create an approval gateway, make the Commission a participant in CAA consultation, or require an airport to delay a decision pending Commission analysis.

Require a Fit-for-Purpose Business Case, not a prescribed Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)

11 CIAL supports disclosure that explains the investment need, material options considered, costs, assumptions and reasons for the preferred option. Airports should be able to provide a summary of, or cross-reference, the material actually used in their decision process rather than create a new regulatory requirement.

12 A prescribed public-sector style cost-benefit analysis is not routinely applicable to airport capital investment. The determination should allow quantitative and qualitative analysis appropriate to the project's nature and maturity, with limitations explained.

Retain the Commission's Approach to Assurance

13 CIAL supports disclosure of independent assurance or peer review reports already held by an airport, rather than mandatory verification. Assurance is often staged and specialised and can include procurement-sensitive material and third-party intellectual property. Additional mandatory verification would add cost, risk delay and move the regime towards pre-approval.

14 The final determination should also preserve a clear carve-out for commercially sensitive information.

Conclusion

15 CIAL asks the Commission to retain the 20% RAB threshold; keep programme aggregation targeted; avoid continuous re-disclosure; permit fit-for-purpose business-case analysis; retain the 'reports held' approach to assurance; and clearly preserve the boundary between ID and CAA consultation.

16 Those refinements would improve transparency without duplication substantial customer engagement or weakening incentives to invest in necessary airport infrastructure.

Please contact me to discuss any element of our cross-submission

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Tim May
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER