

From: [Carl Van Der Meulen](#)
To: [Harry Atkins](#)
Cc: [Carmen Mak](#); [OCU](#); [Ministers Office](#)
Subject: **Out of scope**
Date: Thursday, 19 January 2023 3:40:34 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Hi Harry,

Thanks for clarifying with Emma that the Office is ok with some email points.

In response to the MPI update on pressures at Auckland International Airport (AIAL), the Minister has asked why the mishandled baggage (MHB) issue is so acute at Auckland, but not at other international airports. We have an update from Auckland Airport after discussing this with them last week, and I have also followed up with Air New Zealand and BARNZ.

Why is it a particular issue at Auckland Airport?

- Auckland Airport accounts for over 90% of long-haul flight into NZ and more than 75% of all international flights. As a result Auckland Airport bears the overwhelming brunt of MHB that enters NZ and can't be compared other NZ airports.
- Other airports in our region are facing similar issues. Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane have all faced similar issues as have major hubs such as Heathrow.

Why is it an issue now?

- Increased volumes of MHB arriving at Auckland Airport has been a problem for several months; the issue was highlighted over the peak Christmas and New Year travel season and is likely to continue due to ongoing pressures in the global system.
- Most mishandled bags are because of missed transfers – so while a passenger may make their connecting flight to New Zealand their bag may not.
- New Zealand as a long-haul destination often requires passengers changing flights several times. The more connections the increased risk of MHB. The global pressures on the aviation system (causing missed on time performance) significantly increase this risk for each connection on a route to New Zealand.
- The global aviation labour shortage has exacerbated the situation. Simply there's just not enough staff to deal with the volume of travellers and bags so there are more MHB than pre Covid.
- Over summer, Auckland also experienced the downstream impact of some terrible winter weather storms in North America that disrupted travel in some of the major departure airports for airlines coming to Auckland Airport.
- We are yet to see if the recent computer outages in the FAA system in the USA will cause a further surge of MHB.

What is being done about?

- Airports are designed to flow passengers and their bags through the arrivals process; the sheer volume of bags is an issue for the airport as it has not been designed to store bags, or to have processes to reconcile large volumes of MHB
- Auckland Airport has now installed a new racking system to store MHB in a collaborative approach with airlines, ground handlers, and border agencies
- MHB are the responsibility of airlines. Airlines cooperate under IATA obligations to assist each other in the reconciliation of MHB.

Auckland airport also notes that they are still only at 70% of pre-COVID capacity and are expecting an increase in flights as China reopens and for the FIFA Women's World Cup Qualifying tournament and main tournament occur later this year.

Regards,
Carl

Carl van der Meulen

Kaiwhakahaere | Manager
Kōwhiri-19 | Covid-19 Readiness and Response

Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport

M: [9\(2\)\(a\)](#) | E: [9\(2\)\(a\)](#) | transport.govt.nz



From: OCU <ocu@transport.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 11 January 2023 2:37 pm

To: [Carmen Mak](#); [9\(2\)\(a\)](#); [Carl Van Der Meulen](#); [9\(2\)\(a\)](#)

Cc: OCU <xxx@xxxxxxxxxx>

Subject: RE: **Out of scope**

Kia ora kōrua,

Out of scope

9(2)(a), Minister Wood's Office would like "a separate update for Minister Wood relating to the mishandled baggage situation at Auckland airport". Could we please have this by COP 31 Jan?

"The Minister is requesting a view from MoT on why this issue is "so acute at Auckland, but not at other international airports""

Name	Topic	Email Subject	Comment
9(2)(a)	Auckland international airport concerns that staffing shortage is leading to high rates of mishandled bags	FW: Auckland International Airport Update	The Minister is requesting a view from MoT on why this issue is "so acute at Auckland, but not at other international airports"

Ngā mihi nui,

Emma Humphrey
Kaitohutohu - Tuhiinga Ōkawa | Advisor, Official Correspondence

Out of scope

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Out of scope

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Out of scope

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT