



Connect - Grow - Inspire - Represent

PRESS RELEASE 15 MAY 2024 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘Mistake to sell down shares in Airport’: Chamber CEO

It would be a mistake to sell down the city’s shares in the Hamilton Airport, says Waikato Chamber of Commerce CEO Don Good.

“Waikato Regional Airport Ltd is a success story. Its prudent board and management should be congratulated in operating profitably in such a difficult industry as aviation.”

“The Airport is also on the cusp of strong growth with its property developments which will add substantially to its value for ratepayers.”

Good’s comments come on the back of calls by councillors Geoff Taylor and Ewan Wilson to sell down the Hamilton’s shares in the WRAL to pay down some of the city’s debt.

“Hamilton City Councillors should not seek to suck funds out of a successful entity to fund their own poor performance.”

The aviation sector is undergoing huge change at present and once Auckland Airport has concluded its strategy of change there will be opportunity for Hamilton Airport to grow even further.

“To sell shares is populist and a poor short and long- term investment strategy for your ratepayers.”

“Look at the growth of the Port of Tauranga’s growth over the past several decades. Given the growth of the Waikato as New Zealand’s logistics capital the Airport is poised to ride a similar trajectory.”

Earlier this year councillors asked WRAL to aim for bigger dividends and beef up its commitment to attract international flights.

An updated statement of intent for 2024-2025 by WRAL says a new objective is to future proof Hamilton as an international airport, continue “active engagement” with airlines wanting to use the city for international flights, and ensure the needed infrastructure and border agencies were in place to support such services.

Ends

Media inquiries: Don Good | 029 8233 533 | don.good@waikatochamber.co.nz