Aviation Sector
Skills Summary

Contents

Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project

The Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project is an initiative from ServiceIQ that brings together service sector stakeholders from industry, employers, schools, tertiary education providers, and iwi throughout Aotearoa New Zealand to reflect on the impacts of COVID-19.

The purpose of the project is to hear stakeholder perspectives on:

▶ how COVID-19 has reshaped vocational pathways and business, and

▶ what people and skills, training, and learning pathways are needed to get a head start to COVID-19 recovery.

The stakeholder consultation began in October 2020 and concluded in January 2021. In total, 321 sector representatives attended 41 focus group sessions in 10 regions throughout New Zealand. Their perspectives shaped the creation of online surveys, resulting in 488 responses that provided further views on how COVID-19 impacted the service sectors, and what support is needed for recovery.
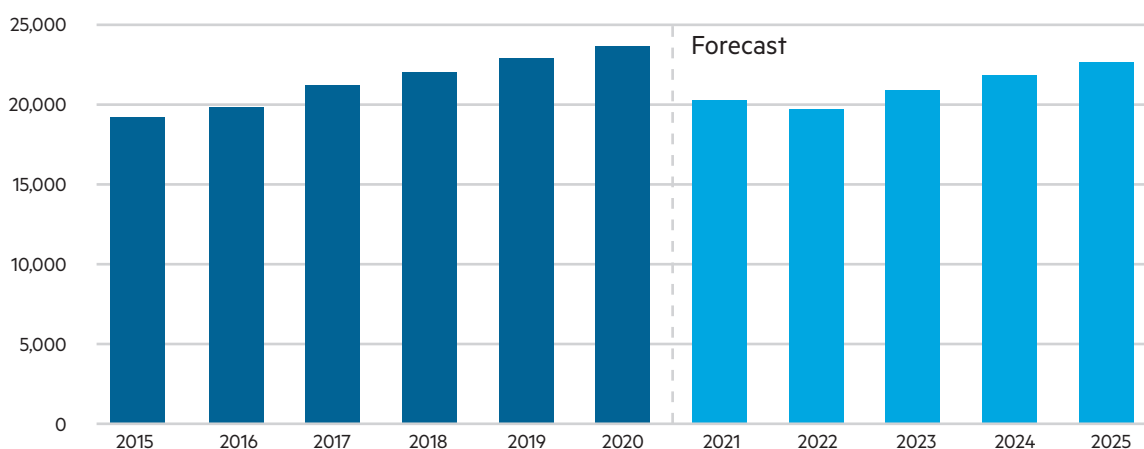
The consultation results have been combined with industry insights, data and forecasting to produce nine sector skills summaries, one for each sector represented by ServiceIQ in our capacity as a Transitional Industry Training Organisation for the Services Workforce Development Council. This skills summary is for the aviation sector. There are eight other summaries for the accommodation; cafés, bars and restaurants; catering; clubs; quick service restaurants; retail and retail supply chain; travel; and tourism sectors.

From this research ServiceIQ will produce a workforce strategy for the Services Workforce Development Council Establishment Board. The strategy will include industry, employer, schools, provider, and iwi voices. In this way the project gives service sector stakeholders an opportunity to shape vocational education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The report is structured into five main areas to show what impacts COVID-19 has had on the sector; the sector response to COVID-19; key drivers of future success; skills needed to support sector recovery; and skills initiatives and strategies.
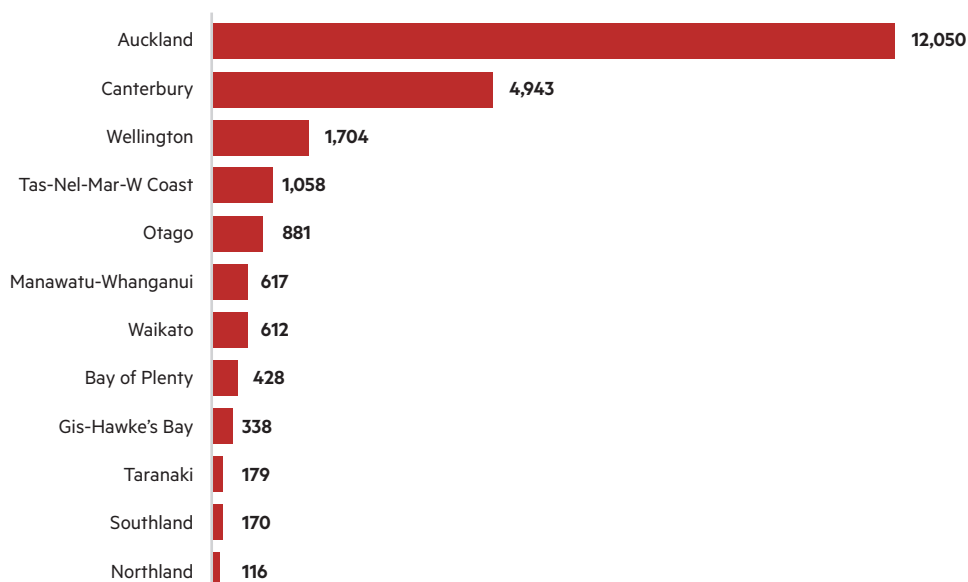
Aviation Sector Snapshot[1]

Aviation sector jobs

Forecast

(x-axis: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025; y-axis: 0 to 25,000)

▶ Prior to COVID-19 there were 23,095 jobs in the aviation sector and the sector was forecast to grow 13.3% between 2020 and 2025. Infometrics now forecasts job losses of 3,327 or 14.4% of the aviation sector workforce in the year to March 2021, followed by 531 job losses or 2.7% in the year to March 2022. The sector is forecast to grow 6.1% (1,179 jobs) and 4.6% (938 jobs) in the following two years, but in 2025 it is still forecast to have over 1,000 fewer jobs than pre-COVID-19.

2020 Regional employment

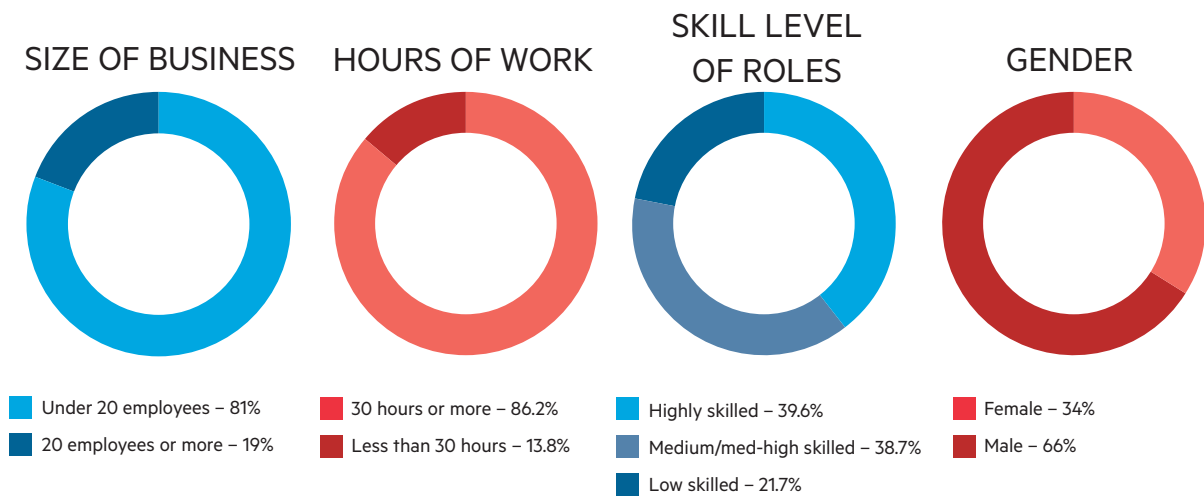| Region	Employment
Auckland	12,050
Canterbury	4,943
Wellington	1,704
Tas-Nel-Mar-W Coast	1,058
Otago	881
Manawatu-Whanganui	617
Waikato	612
Bay of Plenty	428
Gis-Hawke's Bay	338
Taranaki	179
Southland	170
Northland	116

▶ Average earnings in the sector were $86,700 in 2019, growing 3.3% on average annually in the past 10 years.

▶ In 2020 aircraft maintenance engineers and aeroplane pilots made up 25% of the sector. Other aviation roles include flight attendants, air traffic controllers, aircraft baggage handlers and ground crew, flying instructors and helicopter pilots.
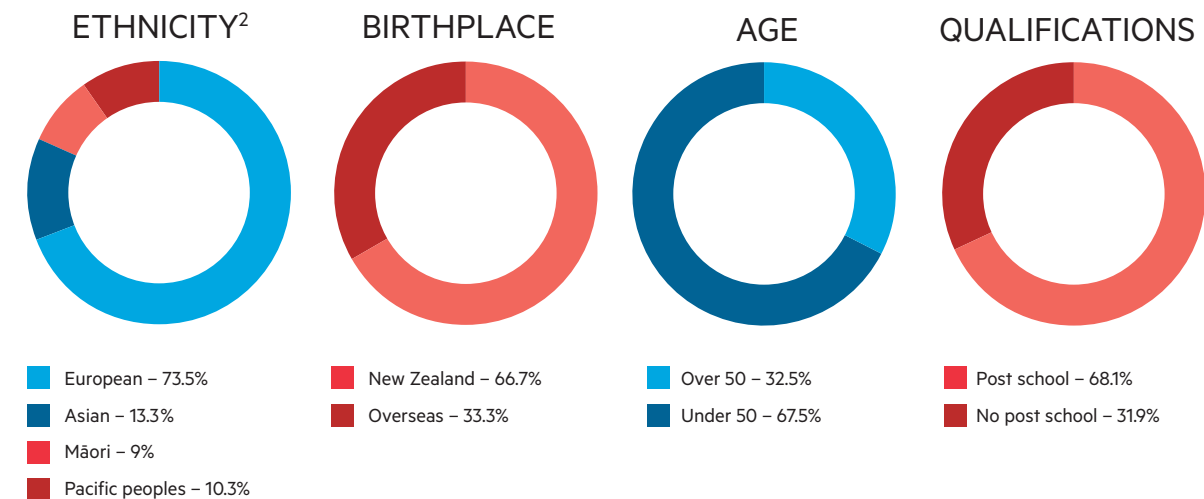
2020 Sector data

23,095	21,770	3.1%
JOBS	**FTE JOBS**	**GROWTH FROM 2019–2020**

0.9%	$3,471m	$159,429
OF ALL JOBS IN NZ	**GDP**	**GDP PER FTE**

▶ GDP per FTE (full time equivalent) was $159,429, higher than the GDP per FTE for the overall economy which was $139,983.

SIZE OF BUSINESS   HOURS OF WORK   SKILL LEVEL OF ROLES   GENDER

■ Under 20 employees – 81%
■ 20 employees or more – 19%

■ 30 hours or more – 86.2%
■ Less than 30 hours – 13.8%

■ Highly skilled – 39.6%
■ Medium/med-high skilled – 38.7%
■ Low skilled – 21.7%

■ Female – 34%
■ Male – 66%

▶ In 2020 there were 497 business units employing one or more people, with an average of 16 people employed per business (compared to 4.4 people per business in the overall economy).

▶ The proportion of females has increased over the past decade from 27.3% in 2010 to 34% in 2020. Over this period the number of females working in the aviation sector increased by 2,786 while the number of males increased by 1,794.

Sector demographic data from 2018 Census

ETHNICITY[2]   BIRTHPLACE   AGE   QUALIFICATIONS

■ European – 73.5%
■ Asian – 13.3%
■ Māori – 9%
■ Pacific peoples – 10.3%

■ New Zealand – 66.7%
■ Overseas – 33.3%

■ Over 50 – 32.5%
■ Under 50 – 67.5%

■ Post school – 68.1%
■ No post school – 31.9%

[2] Employees may identify with more than one ethnicity.

Sector Consultation Insights

1. The impacts of COVID-19 on the aviation sector

Customers

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the aviation sector with international border restrictions significantly reducing international travel. Previously passenger arrivals were 600,000 per month; this is now down to around 13,000 per month allowed based on the capacity of Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) facilities. There were previously 30 airlines flying passenger services and this went down to eight. In addition, international visitor spend on domestic travel and tourist flights is minimal. At Alert Levels 3 and 4 only essential domestic travel could take place. At Alert Level 2 other domestic travel and tourist flight operations resumed. Airlines have had a huge reduction in revenue, lost a lot of capability and reduced operational efficiencies.

The International Air Freight Capacity scheme helped maintain international cargo capacity and capability, and it is hoped this can continue while there are border restrictions. Cargo costs have increased since COVID-19. Supply chains and freight have been impacted; orders need to be done well in advance.

Engine maintenance work is greatly reduced, working on half the usual number of engines. While most technical maintenance needs are unchanged, some new engineering maintenance work has been needed on idle aircraft. Delivery of engines and aircraft parts is problematic, with the freight costs of these being flown in and in the case of engines, flown back out, greatly increased. There is growth in engineering work on military aircraft. NZDF has been a stable customer base, with an increase in work during COVID-19.

For helicopter operators it has helped to have a spread of work, e.g. commercial and agricultural work, but even so retaining staff has meant using financial reserves. It has been harder for scenic tour operators due to the lack of international tourists which has led to staff reductions. Domestic tourists spend less and take shorter flights which means reduced revenue but similar costs. Agricultural work has held up well.

Staff

Organisational structure

Overall, even with a buoyant domestic market, revenue is down, and businesses have had to downsize. There is a global ripple effect on business continuity, job roles and job security. Younger people and newer people have been most impacted by job losses. Restructures have included staff reductions and therefore a loss of talent. Reduced hours, flexi leave and leave without pay have all been used, as ways of retaining people for when the sector starts to recover.

Where there has been a reduction in instructors this has reduced training capacity and capability. This loss of experience is a real concern. There has been a reduction of staff in support office functions leading to those retained having broader roles.

For Air Traffic Control there have been job losses, but this has affected support roles, and fewer contractors, with no reduction of air traffic controllers. There are fewer international air traffic control students and no domestic training as there are no jobs to pathway into currently. There is an understanding that training will be needed for the pipeline, but this is costly, especially when revenue is greatly reduced.

Airline staff numbers are down, with an emphasis on controlling costs. No overtime has meant lower pay for staff. Apprentice trainees have been retained (although they were encouraged to take leave without pay). There have been no jobs to offer new graduates and there is unlikely to be a 2021 intake. There are union considerations in terms of re-employing staff when there is a need to expand again.

NZDF has focused on readiness to react, maintaining operations, and keeping training going where possible but it did take some time to catch up post-lockdown. They are still recruiting but some existing contracts not being renewed. Many aviation trainees from Air Force bases have been redirected to MIQ work which requires security experience, people skills training and constant relationship building to ensure government agencies work together effectively. This may result in delays to trainees completing their qualifications.

Wellbeing

The overall personal wellbeing of staff and trainees has been impacted. There have been health and financial impacts and people feel vulnerable and insecure. Resilience has been needed during an uncertain time. For those who have retained their roles there has been an emotional impact, with survivor's guilt and fatigue setting in. There is demand on staff and management to do more with lower staff numbers. Some more experienced engineers have struggled with resilience.

Recruitment and training

In the workplace the current trainee cohort has been retained but limited new trainees are expected to be taken on in 2021. During lockdown, trainees were stood down and away from work so catch-up training was needed as there are physical requirements to training that cannot be substituted. For engineering and flight training integrated learning is essential. At Alert Level 4 exams stopped and at Level 3 physical distancing meant there were no flight exams with government agency advice quite unclear at this time.

Current aviation jobseekers are mostly a mix of those at the start of their career and those nearing the end (as they were the most affected by restructures). There are currently not many job vacancies. Layoffs from larger airlines of experienced staff has increased the talent pool for smaller operators. There is some reluctance around joining the aviation industry when new jobs are advertised e.g. IT developers.

The most employable people are still those that have a combination of skills and a good attitude.

There is still skills demand for the aviation sector and students leaving school, including international students, are an accessible pipeline for training providers. There can be full intakes of domestic students and internationals currently in New Zealand. Overseas airlines want cadets to train in New Zealand but that can only happen when border restrictions are eased.

Training providers have had to lay off staff, including instructors, with existing students only and no new international students. Once the current cohort finishes, new intakes will be very small if at all. Flight training schools are hugely reliant on international students who make up seventy per cent of the cohort, so they are at risk of closing without support until borders reopen. Overseas students who have committed to coming to New Zealand for pilot training currently cannot enter the country.

There is a decline in 2021 student enrolments in tourism as a school subject, which is often the beginning of a pathway into the aviation sector e.g. flight attendants. This has been amplified by negative perceptions from some teachers and parents.

During lockdown face to face learning stopped at tertiary education providers and learning moved online until alert levels lowered. There was pressure on staff to quickly develop online learning. When training restarted after lockdown both tutors and students needed a refresh.

Technology

Where possible staff worked remotely during lockdown and where it can be accommodated this has continued for some or all the time. People were able to demonstrate the ability to work productively and effectively remotely. Remote meetings have been effective as they tend to be more focused and there are time efficiencies from not travelling to meetings.

E-learning has been developed however NZQA restrictions make this difficult. Online training is being utilised to keep international students based overseas engaged.

Planning

Organisations had to adapt and change plans throughout 2020 and new recovery and rebuild plans have been developed. Growing down to a smaller organisation is a new concept and retaining currency capability is key. There is still a lot of uncertainty around planning, with a gradual increase in aviation activity expected.

When training could not take place, training capacity was utilised for course development.
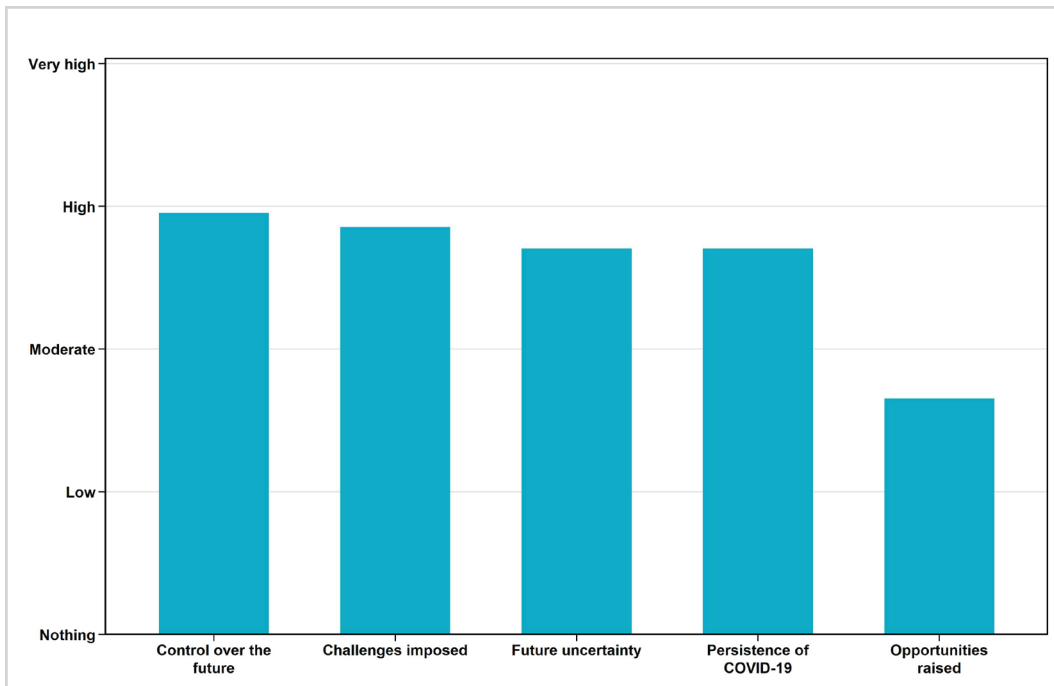
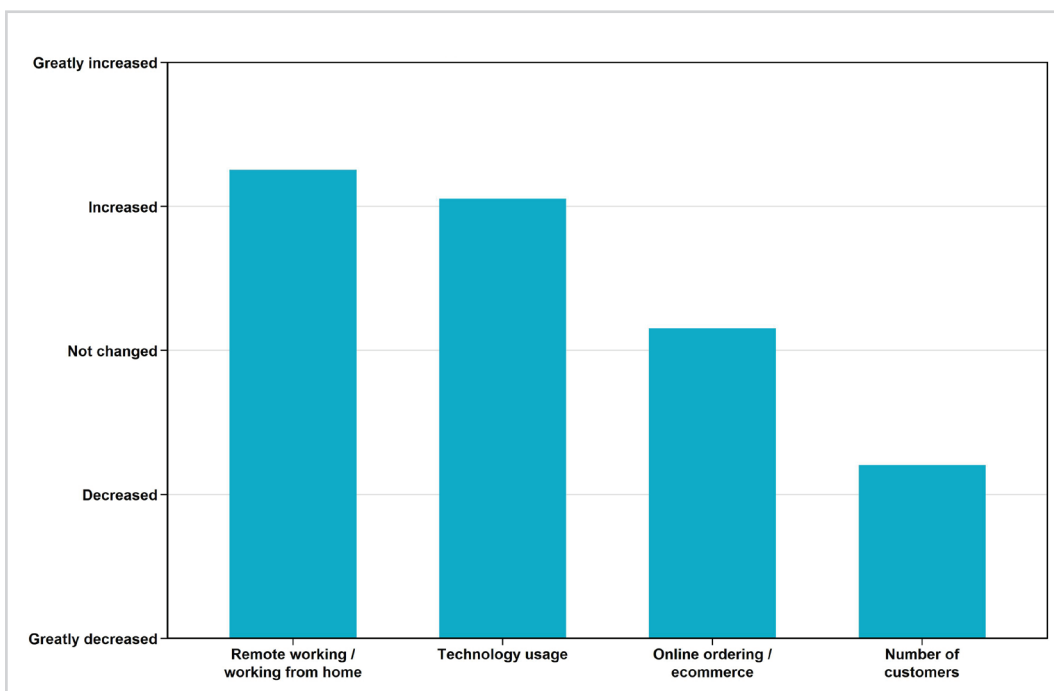**Figure 1.1.** The extent to which COVID-19 impacted the aviation sector.*

Figure 1.2. The extent to which COVID-19 influenced behaviour in the aviation sector.*

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* Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project COVID-19 Industry Response Survey – Aviation sector respondents

2. The response to date as a result of COVID-19

Customers

It is important to recognise opportunities and potential revenue streams e.g. cargo and scenic flights for domestic tourists. Some aviation businesses have received government support through the Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme (STAPP) fund which is seen by some other operators as an unfair competitive advantage.

Providers have reached out to schools as both a revenue stream and to help create a pipeline. International students are a key revenue stream, and New Zealand is seen as an attractive safe study option. While borders are closed work is being done with NZQA regarding approval of offshore learning.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) who oversees aviation safety has had reduced revenue due to fewer passenger arrivals but is working hard to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and to be responsive and collaborative with the sector.

Staff

Mental wellbeing has become a focus area. The future has changed, and this does have a psychological impact. Where there have been staff reductions, remaining staff are taking on more. There is an increased emphasis on Human Factors training, considering external factors that are influencing staff, causing frustration and distraction. Training is taking place around fatigue, e.g. air traffic controllers staying alert when there are few flights. Boredom creates risk in the aviation sector, so it is important to keep people engaged, ensuring they have a good attention span and strong attention to detail.

AviationNZ and CAA have worked closely together to understand the skills and knowledge capability developed and compliance needs. High needs training has been adapted to meet greater compliance requirements.

The aviation sector has worked with unions when restructuring. This does prolong the change process somewhat and can mean some of the best most employable people leave.

Where there is recruitment taking place job applicants tend to be early or late career. There is a need for a flexible workforce so roles being offered tend to be fixed term or project roles.

Communication

Good communication has been essential to ensure people are kept well informed. Some cynicism has emerged but generally people accept the reality of the current situation. AviationNZ has been advocating to government on behalf of the aviation sector. They have updated their website, and have connected with the sector through webinars, weekly e-newsletters and social media, monitoring what works best. Member surveys have meant that evidence-based data can be used for advocacy. No fees were charged while members were grounded which has meant reduced revenue.

Technology

There has been an acceleration of remote working and more flexible working conditions. Work from home guidelines/policies have been developed. There has been upskilling to increase computer literacy, with differing acceptance across the different age groups in the aviation workforce.

Online training and assessment material was developed, with staff development on effective online facilitation. This has made training more accessible and flexible. Devices and data were provided to trainees if needed. Ground operations training is moving to online delivery, but currently international students cannot enter New Zealand once the skills are developed.

An example of effective online training is Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) which Air New Zealand used successfully to deliver theory training during Covid lockdowns. Digital marketing and marketing campaigns have been used to reach different markets and for business development. Tendering e.g. for government contracts has moved online.

Operational / Process

Organisations have had to maintain readiness, be adaptable, nimble and more responsive to changes. Planning and preparedness has been a key focus. Aviation businesses have looked for efficiencies to help control costs. One example is consolidation of engineering locations for financial sustainability.

The opportunity has been taken to clean up systems and processes while it is quieter, with more strategic thinking around hardware, software and people (how to retain capability).

New safety management systems have been developed to include change management and risk management systems. Change management is key, helping people to focus on what is within their sphere of control. With forecasts uncertain scenario planning is important. The definition of success has changed and for many currently, stability is seen as success. Viability depends on adapting to the changing needs of the business as well as the impacts of COVID-19. An innovative and flexible approach is needed to meet current demands while at the same time developing capability to ensure future needs are met.
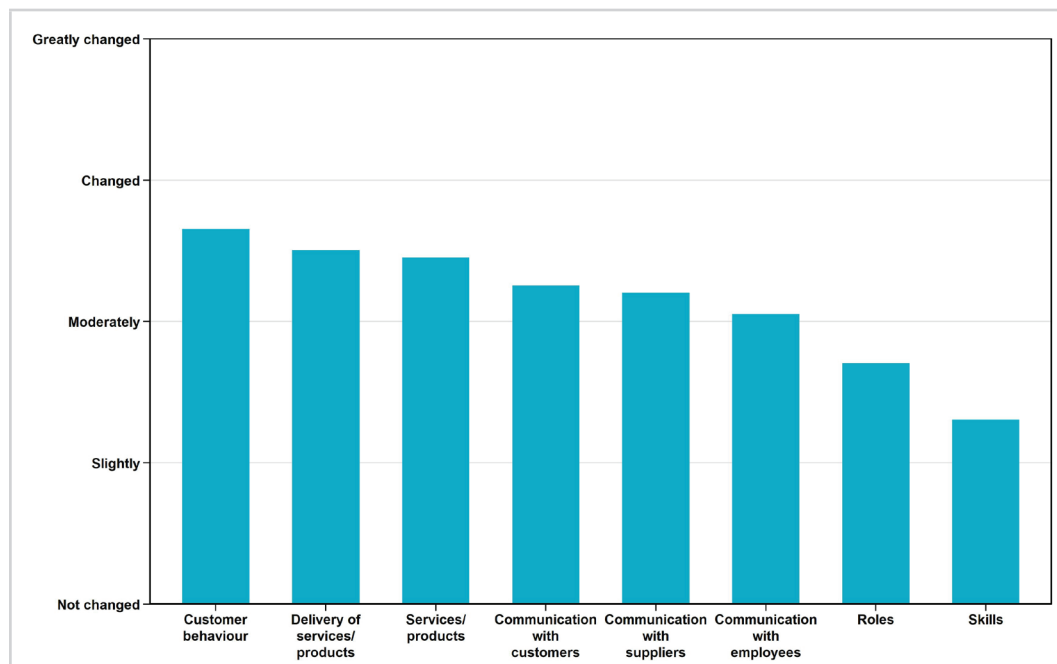

Figure 2. The extent of change the aviation sector has felt since the arrival of COVID-19.*

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* Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project COVID-19 Industry Response Survey – Aviation sector respondents

3. Key drivers of future success for the aviation sector

Industry

▶ Consistent strategic industry leadership is vital, with collaboration across the aviation sector, government and education providers.

▶ Strategic planning e.g. Air New Zealand's Survive, Revive and Thrive 800 day plan.

▶ Cargo is key for revenue and profit and maintaining key air connections, however, to remain viable airlines need either increased passenger flight revenue or lower costs (including staff costs).

▶ There needs to be greater aircraft utilisation i.e. hours in the air.

▶ Aviation businesses need a digital strategy; a good online platform for customer transactions and communication improves productivity.

▶ The industry must highlight the breadth of opportunities to attract a more diverse range of talent. It needs to target groups traditionally under-represented in aviation. This includes promoting women in aviation, and connecting with iwi and smaller regions. Attracting the right trainees and staff is key to the recovery and future success of the aviation sector.

▶ Flexible HR policies are needed for when the sector rehires for the recovery.

▶ Where possible, the sector should accommodate the ability to work from different locations.

▶ A greater focus on sustainability and Tiaki (guide, care,protect, safeguard).

▶ Investment in professional development opportunities for training and operational personnel, supported by competency mapping, to ensure they have the competencies to perform effectively in the future.

Government

The aviation sector would like greater government engagement and partnership including:

▶ A broader apolitical approach.

▶ Strong lobbying at the right levels.

▶ Policy structure.

▶ Capability retention: ensuring the sector retains the people and assets that it needs to increase activity when this is possible.

▶ True cooperation with industry by Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

▶ Regulations should be performance focused. Competency based training is a unique strength that New Zealand has.

▶ More collaboration with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), recognising aviation is a strong export market.

▶ Economic certainty is needed to enable planning around aviation subsectors such as tourism, education, agricultural aviation, pest eradication.

A functional strategy is needed for border management so that international travellers and international students can enter New Zealand. Travel pass or health pass requirements, vaccination and border control can all be used to ensure international travel can recommence safely when borders reopen.

To help keep New Zealand connected NZ Safe Borders is proposed, including 14-day quarantine options, safe zones and country risk models. The Board of Airline Representatives in New Zealand (BARNZ) advocates for a two-speed, then three speed approach to travel from source markets depending on their COVID risk profile. This would involve testing and potentially reducing quarantine periods depending on the risk factor from specific countries and possibly self-isolation for low-risk arrivals.

On-job training

Training on the job can support:

▶ Cross skilling through developing multiple skill sets.

▶ Skill retention and knowledge transfer:

    ▶ Training and development programmes.

    ▶ Experienced staff passing on knowledge to younger people.

▶ Adaptability:

    ▶ New regulations.

    ▶ Business agility, reduced dependency on a single market.

    ▶ Scalability.

    ▶ Ability to react to opportunities.

    ▶ Future focus, innovation, embracing new technologies.

▶ Recognition of equivalence of skills and knowledge, in addition to attitudes, behaviours and experience. Recognising skills of displaced aviation employees in a qualification through RCC (Recognition of Current Competency).

▶ Drone training.

▶ Recurrence training to meet regulatory requirements.

The sector would like the Workforce Development Council (WDC) to be up and running as soon as possible, and collaboration between ServiceIQ and tertiary education providers throughout the transition. ServiceIQ's efforts to bridge industry and government are appreciated; further active liaison activities are supported and encouraged. Improved collaboration/pathways between schools, tertiary providers and industry are needed.

Training providers

Aviation training providers are heavily reliant on international students. More support is needed for providers to survive while there are border restrictions e.g. a targeted wage subsidy. In 2020 there were still international and domestic students but 2021 will be harder. Allowing international aviation students to enter New Zealand or study offshore are alternatives that will allow training to continue.

Aviation training providers feel their voice is not being heard by government. In terms of advocacy for aviation training AviationNZ and NZTE have both been lobbying NZQA. The Workforce Development Council will need to do this as well to advocate for the education and training needs of the aviation industry. Some training providers are considering dropping NZQA qualifications, with the view that regulatory licensing is what actually matters.

Training needs to continue, with a long-term view, for both pilot and engineer training. Aviation sector skills take time to develop, so it is crucial for the sector that skills shortages do not constrain its recovery when borders reopen.

Schools

Communication between schools and the aviation sector is quite low. Connections between the industry and school career advisors can help with sector promotion and pipeline creation. Messaging needs to highlight aviation career pathways and provide visibility around the wide range of aviation job opportunities. This could include current aviation employees presenting to youth, career success stories, workplace visits and work experience. There are two Aviation Gateway programmes for secondary school students: Aviation Gateway Flying programme and Aviation Gateway/STAR Aeroscience programme. Ensuring these programmes are available and supported nationwide will help grow the aviation talent pipeline.

The aviation sector would like schools to develop soft skills in students and these will help students stand out in a competitive labour market. These are general skills across all jobs and include:

▶ People skills.
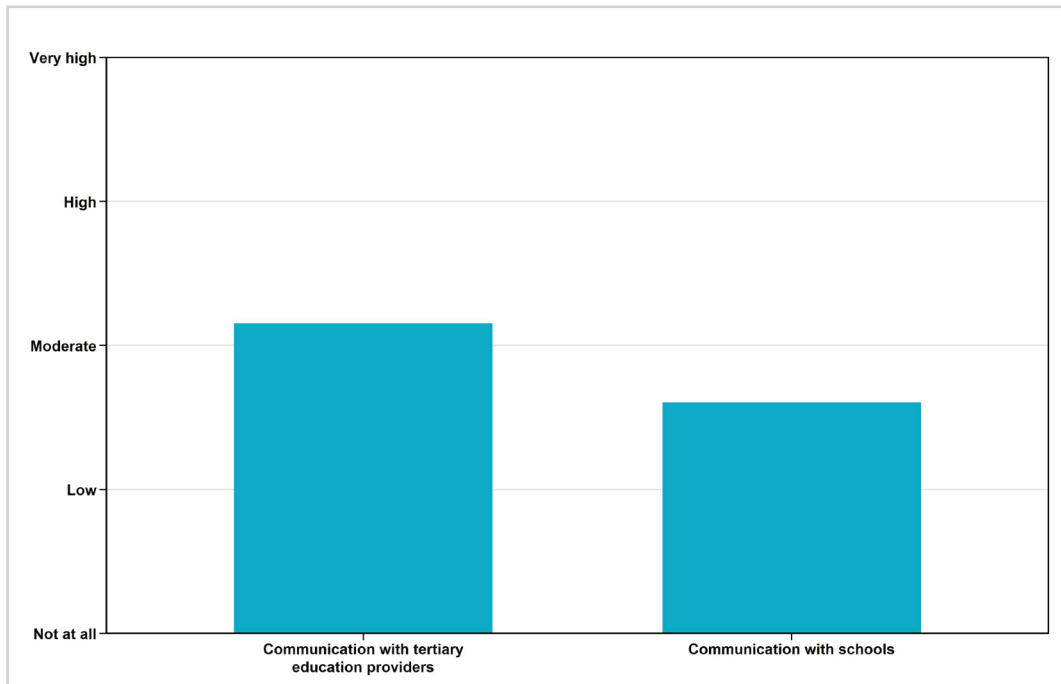
▶ Cooperation.

▶ Conflict resolution.

▶ Teamwork.

Figure 3. The communication level the aviation sector has with tertiary education providers and schools.*

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* Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project COVID-19 Industry Response Survey – Aviation sector respondents

4. Skills needed to support the aviation sector recovery

Changes in skills and roles

Staff are being cross-skilled and upskilled for retention. Horizontal integration of skills and competencies has taken place to optimise efficiency, capability and engagement. Transferable skills have been developed and staff trained to be more versatile e.g. ability to work on multiple aircraft.

Roles now include mobility of work skills, work practices, locations and hours.

Changes in the importance of skills

Skills that have increased in importance include:

- Communication skills.
- Workforce wellbeing, dealing with uncertainty.
- Empathy.
- Management capability and awareness, 'hearts and minds' leadership skills.
- Getting to know staff strengths; this helps people feel valued and builds understanding of skills within the organisation and organisation learning needs.
- Resilience training for both staff and managers.
- Flexibility.
- Controlling the controllables, not just being reactive.
- Social connections.
- Collaboration to share ideas, skills and knowledge.
- Understand and adapting to generational differences.
- Business acumen.
- Financial capability and financial management. Operating expenses have increased, e.g. insurance has skyrocketed, so it is important to be monitoring costs closely.
- Forecasting skills.
- Technology skills and experience.
- Embracing diversity in the workplace.
- Understanding learning differences and specific learning needs.
- Training capability to train to requirement standards under CAA legislation.
- Regulations: Demonstrate understanding of risk, remaining informed. Clear communication is vital as there will be new regulations.

The importance of both soft skills and vocational skills have increased slightly since COVID-19 and the aviation sector is finding new staff are less equipped with soft skills than vocational skills.

New skills needed

▶ Embedding soft skills learning and training into the organisation.

▶ Defining the required future focused competencies (technical and soft skills) needed.

▶ New training delivery models, Online design, delivery and facilitation. Use of different platforms for learning, virtual learning.

▶ Change management.

▶ Digital marketing.

▶ Planning capability; project the positives in the reset.

▶ Regulatory oversight to understand the knowledge and capability across the sector, especially where the headcount has decreased.

▶ Understanding government policy and legislation and sector advocacy. Regulatory intervention is needed to support the sector's needs.

▶ Readiness to react, e.g. border reopening, aviation security.

▶ Adaptability to support scalability.

▶ Working remotely.

▶ Drone skills, as there is likely to be greater demand for these in the future.

Skills shortages

▶ Maintenance engineers and licensed engineers.

▶ Aviation business knowledge.

▶ Avionics.

▶ Experienced pilots (pre COVID-19 and this is likely in the recovery as some pilots have retired early due to COVID-19).

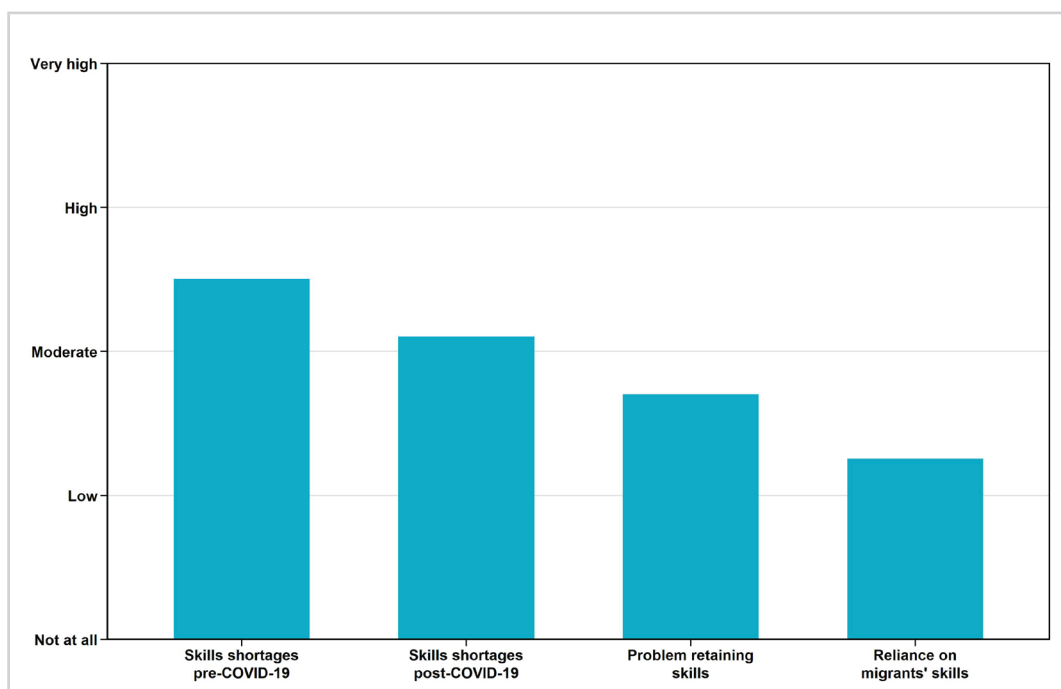▶ Attracting aviation computer programmers and developers as the sector is currently seen as risky.

Figure 4. Rating of major skills shortages identified in aviation sector focus groups.*

[*] Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project COVID-19 Industry Response Survey – Aviation sector respondents

5. Skills initiatives and solutions to support the sector over the next two years

How to get the skills

▶ Leverage and develop the education and training currently available.

▶ Innovation e.g. invest in online digital capability, educational design to achieve good educational outcomes.

▶ Virtual resources for core unit standards and alternative pathways.

▶ Pre-employment training to develop the practical hand skills needed in students entering the aviation sector.

▶ Soft skills development, including communication skills and adaptability, should start in schools and should be incorporated into induction, all training and appraisals.

▶ Resilience training including versatility and awareness.

▶ Mental wellbeing programmes.

▶ Leadership soft skills training:

 ▶ People leadership skills.

 ▶ Change management.

 ▶ Self-belief, valuing the organisation.

▶ Train business skills early, to help all staff to understand the business.

▶ Business mentoring on business planning and resilience; mentoring is in place for engineering and flying but not business.

▶ Reinvent business models – share strategic skills, business costing.

▶ Planning – having a vision, look and plan towards the future, scenario planning.

▶ Aircraft engineer certificates and licences are different, there is a need to get younger staff into their licencing habits while that are doing basic trade training.

▶ Licensing needs to be theory then practical, with refreshers if there are delays between theory and practical e.g due to COVID-19.

▶ Maintaining connections with displaced staff, so the workforce returns when aviation is growing again.

▶ Integrate human factors training into technical training.

▶ Continuous monitoring of training is required to ensure the effectiveness of the training. This helps organisations determine whether their training is delivering the outcomes expected and provides a basis for continual improvement.

Support needed

▶ Re-examining of pathways and help for organisations to form a clear strategy for training needs and pathways. Training providers meet to discuss skill needs and future planning.

▶ Funding of aviation training through the Targeted Training and Apprentice Fund (TTAF). Aviation training costs are a barrier which needs to be addressed for a more diverse workforce.

▶ The EFTS (Effective Full-time Student) funding model needs to be reviewed to ensure it is future focused, with the EFTS cap set at a level that ensures enough people can be trained in the aviation roles needed for the aviation sector's recovery Flight training costs have increased and funding has not kept up, which has restricted the accessibility of training.

▶ Acknowledgement of a pilot shortage at government level and review of funding. A proactive and collaborative response is needed from the government and airlines, with investment in training to meet future workforce needs.

▶ Effective engagement between Domestic Rotary General Aviation and NZQA and TEC regarding equitable student funding, that reflects training activity and student achievements. Funding is needed to support the career path from helicopter pilot to instructor, which is currently very costly and there is a shortage. This part of the aviation sector would like input into the formation of the Workforce Development Council teams dealing with aviation to see effective reform.

▶ A collaborative working relationship between all stakeholders including the aviation sector, NZQA, CAA, the Workforce Development Council, ServiceIQ and providers. Having all parties connecting will avoid advisory group overlap and be more efficient.

▶ Use data to track trainees after completing to understand where they go.

▶ Development of digital technology to improve both the customer interface and internal work processes, utilising technology to work smarter.

▶ Support for costs of courseware or developing courseware, including materials and equipment to keep up with changing technology and future needs.
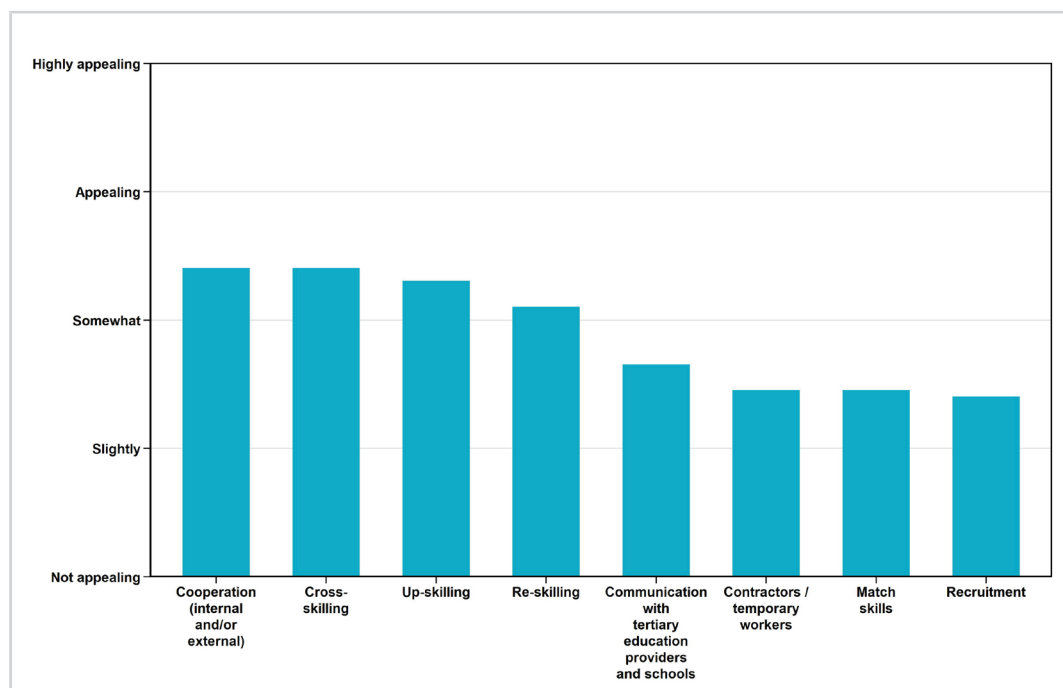

Figure 5.1. COVID-19 recovery strategies that will be considered by the aviation sector.*

* Hinonga Kōkiri / Head Start Project COVID-19 Industry Response Survey – Aviation sector respondents

Training needs

▶ Aviation is a long-term training industry so always needs to be looking ahead. Currency and competency requirements will define how quickly the previous aviation workforce can resume so it is important to include this in forward planning. CAA must retain the capability to start up and monitor when borders reopen.

▶ Maintain New Zealand's great aviation training reputation, as a safe country to come and study, and build on this when the borders reopen. Industry regulations need to ensure the high quality of training is maintained.

▶ The General Aviation (GA) family is very important. Agriculture, search and rescue, commercial, tourism, training and other services are undertaken with helicopters. Over the years the level of training and its complexities has grown considerably (compared to aeroplane training) and government support for helicopter training has not kept pace. Training and opportunities in the future must address and support the requirements of the domestic helicopter training sector, incorporating all general aviation, not just international student training.

▶ Ensure qualifications are reflective of technical expertise and regulatory requirements.

Learning pathways

Positive imaging of the aviation industry and its future will improve perceptions of the sector, attracting new recruits and growing a pipeline to address long-term skills shortages. Initiatives to attract talent into aviation careers and support training include:

▶ Gateway programmes including the Aviation Gateway Flying programme and Aviation Gateway/STAR Aeronautics programme. Gateway coordinators need to understand the programmes and promote vocational education more.

▶ World Skills.

▶ RNZAF School to Skies.

▶ Apprentice Boost to support employers with apprentices.

There needs to be greater promotion of engineering and maintenance training, highlighting future demand for skills and roles in this part of the aviation sector.

The pipeline of talent can be broadened by promoting aviation more outside of Auckland and Christchurch and having financial support available e.g. scholarships, for under-served groups.

Another strategy could be targeting highly skilled returning New Zealanders with transferable skills and then training and upskilling them.
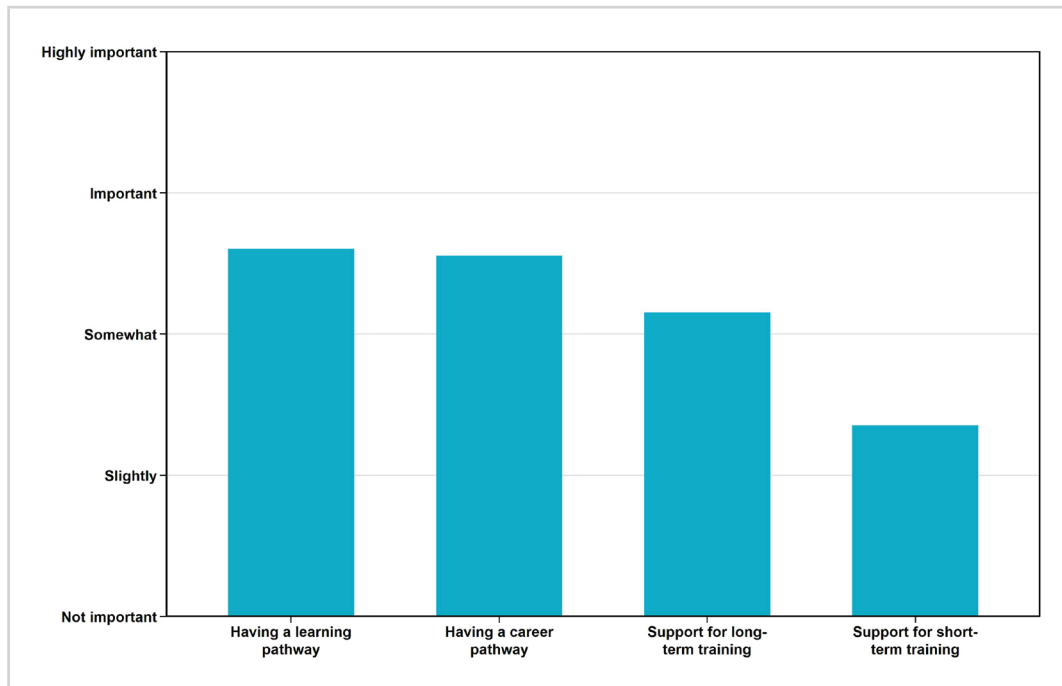

Figure 5.2. The importance of training and pathways.*

Post COVID-19

It may be years before airlines return to pre COVID-19 routes and capacity. There are likely to more health and safety regulations and border requirements, with greater vigilance and precautionary measures in the future.

Some aviation businesses have been stretched due to overseas chains of command, and it is hoped that this will be resolved post COVID-19.

When borders reopen the aviation sector will need to recruit more skilled staff to scale up operations; hopefully including a returning workforce. It is likely offshore recruitment will also be needed.

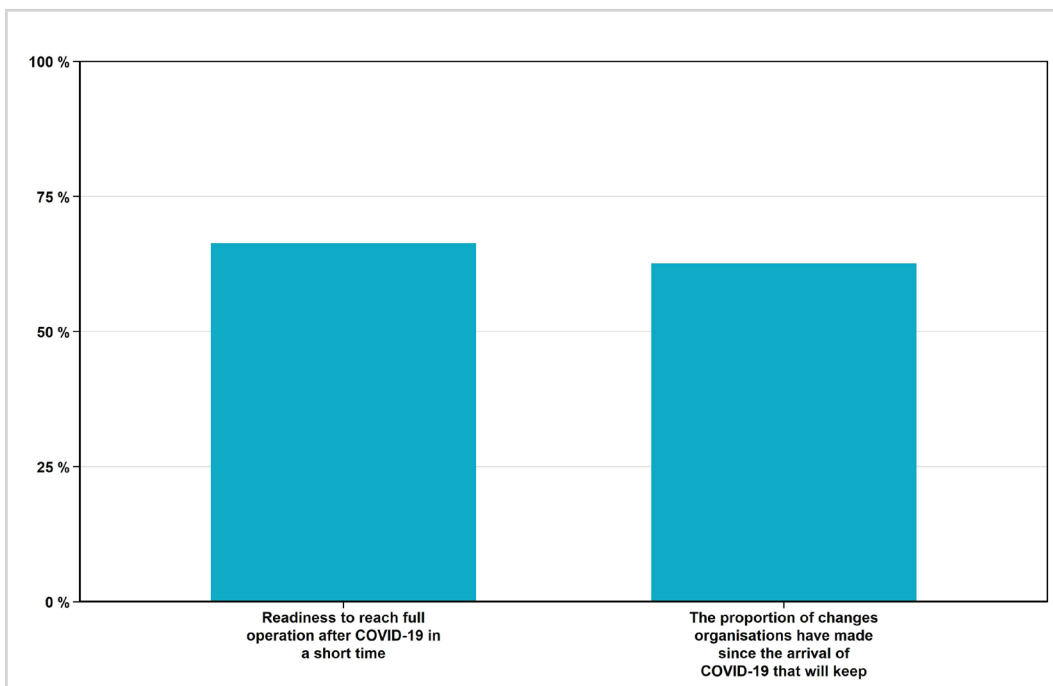There is expected be an increase in international aviation students when they are able enter New Zealand.

Figure 5.3. Operational stability and agility of the aviation sector when COVID-19 border restrictions end.*

Service IQ

HELPING OUR CUSTOMERS SUCCEED
BY GROWING THEIR TALENT