



AIR NZ TO EQUIP ATR FLEET WITH RNP TECHNOLOGY

News / Airlines



Air New Zealand plans to install its fleet of ATR turboprops with Required Navigation Performance (RNP) technology at a cost of NS\$25 million.

The Star Alliance carrier will become the first ATR operator to use RNP, which allows aircraft to fly along predefined routes with the aid of GPS navigation systems.

In practical terms, this means pilots trained for RNP can fly at lower altitudes and along more efficient routes, saving fuel and emissions, as well as minimising potential delays due to bad weather.

The technology has benefitted airports such as Queenstown, helping boost capacity and reduce delays.

Air NZ said on Thursday the first ATR with RNP capability was expected to take to the skies in 2018, following certification and regulatory approval.

“This technology will enable us to provide a more consistent service for customers who travel on our ATR aircraft where weather conditions can at times prove challenging for our turboprop operations, particularly over the winter months,” Air NZ chief flight operations and safety officer Captain David Morgan said in a statement.

In November, Air NZ placed a fresh order for 15 ATR 72-600 turboprops, with 11 frames to replace its existing ATR 72-500 fleet and four for growth on regional routes. The order would make Air NZ the third-largest operator of ATR turboprops in the world.

Air NZ’s Christchurch-based subsidiary Mount Cook Airline operates the aircraft on both regional routes and on some off-peak flights on the mainline trunk from Wellington to Christchurch.

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