

QUEENSTOWN AIRPORT BEGINS RUNWAY, LIGHTING UPGRADES

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Construction work designed to allow the start of evening flights into and out of **Queenstown Airport** has commenced.

Part of the NZ\$17 million project includes widening the runway to 45 metres – from 30 metres currently – and installing a new “comprehensive lighting package” for the runway, taxiway and apron, as well as new approach lights.

The runway is also being resurfaced after it has been widened to 45 metres.

Much of the work will take place at night, when the airport is closed, and be completed by 0500 each day, Queenstown Airport said in a statement on Monday, with the project expected to be completed by April 2016.

“These upgrades will not only give us a more robust, durable runway in all weathers, they will lay the groundwork for us to host evening flights in and out of Queenstown next winter which we believe will be a game-changer for the region,” Queenstown Airport acting chief executive Mark Edghill said.

“This is part of our long term development plan to respond to strong demand from people wanting to experience the stunning southern region.

“Evening flights will spread the peak times more evenly, unlock more opportunities for passengers to access our region, provide locals with more travel options and create job opportunities for our community.”

Currently, Queenstown Airport is restricted to daylight operations only.

In May 2014, New Zealand’s Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) [granted provisional approval](#) for Queenstown Airport to extend its operating hours into night flight operations, subject to subject to the airport meeting a number of conditions.

In addition to the runway improvements and a comprehensive aeronautical lighting package, the NZ CAA and Australia’s Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) also required a customised crew selection and training package; employing the full capability of the existing Required Navigation Performance (RNP) technology; and changes to on-board flight procedures to reduce pilot workload on final approach.

Edghill said the airport would take “all practicable measures” to minimise the impact on residents and to keep dust levels to a minimum during the construction work.



A supplied image of a simulated evening approach into the airport. (Queenstown Airport Corporation)

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SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION

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