

AIR NEW ZEALAND'S 'AIRBAND' TO KEEP TRACK OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

News / Airlines



Air New Zealand is claiming a “world first” with its introduction of near field communication (NFC) chip-equipped ‘Airband’ wristbands for **unaccompanied children** that trigger text messages to be sent to parents and caregivers at key stages of travel.

“Children travelling alone on Air New Zealand services will now receive an Airband at check-in as part of the service,” Air New Zealand said in a statement on Wednesday. “The wristband is embedded with a chip which is scanned at key stages of the journey to trigger text notifications to up to five nominated contacts.”

Air New Zealand general manager customer experience Carrie Hurihanganui said the Airband had been developed after the airline had identified an opportunity to improve the travel experience for unaccompanied children and to give greater peace of mind to their parents and caregivers.

“We believe this is the first time this type of technology has been used by an airline anywhere in the world for the purpose of providing caregivers greater peace of mind when their child is travelling alone,” Hurihanganui said.

“We have been trialling it across our network over recent months and the feedback from parents and guardians has been very positive with many welcoming the additional reassurance of knowing where in the journey their child is.”

All unaccompanied children aged five to 11 will be issued with Airbands, while it is offered as an option for children aged 12 to 16. The Airband is currently free until February 3, after which date a booking fee will apply.

Up to five people can be nominated to receive the text message alerts which are sent on check-in at the airport to confirm registration; upon boarding; when the flight has landed and the child/children are handed over to ground staff; and when they are picked up by the designated pick up person.

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