

Media | Release

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Christchurch Airport buys International Antarctic Centre

Christchurch International Airport (CIAL) has bought the International Antarctic Centre.

CIAL Chief Executive Jim Boulton says he's delighted to be adding the visitor attraction to the airport's portfolio.

"There is obvious synergy here - Christchurch Airport is the tourism gateway and the International Antarctic Centre is a cornerstone of the tourism industry," says Mr Boulton.

"The International Antarctic Centre has twice been judged 'Best New Zealand Visitor Attraction' and visitor feedback and market research consistently show it is popular and well regarded by visitors as well as the industry. The International Antarctic Centre is not only interesting, it's fun - with the Hagglund Ride, the Antarctic Storm, The Snow & Ice Experience, the NZ Penguin Encounter and the new 4D motion experience."

Richard Benton has privately owned the International Antarctic Centre for the past 11 years and has been the driving force behind much of its innovation.

"It has been a real privilege and honour to lead a team that has developed a very successful tourism facility and to have been part of the Christchurch Antarctic community," he says. "The timing is now right to pass on the reins to the airport company for the next very exciting stage of the attraction's development."

Jim Boulton says the acquisition is in line with the company's strategic plan to increase non-aeronautical revenues and profit. Some of this will be achieved through the acquisition and development of complementary or closely aligned businesses.

Other company initiatives are the continuing development of Dakota Park freight and logistics precinct and Spitfire Square, a new retail development which has recently gained consent.

CIAL will take over ownership of the International Antarctic Centre on December 1, with the attraction's staff offered continuing employment.

...END (high resolution images available on request)

For further comment, please contact:

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Christchurch International Airport – New Zealand’s Tourism Gateway

Christchurch International Airport welcomes almost 6 million passengers a year, ranking as New Zealand’s second largest airport. The Airport occupies a unique position economically, as the South Island’s busiest and most strategic air connection to the world’s trade and tourism markets. In addition, the airport plays an important role as the South Island’s major domestic hub servicing all New Zealanders, enabling passengers to connect to a full spectrum of destinations throughout New Zealand. Christchurch International Airport is a major driver of the regional Canterbury economy, generating airport precinct related jobs for nearly 5000 people.

Christchurch International Airport is owned and operated by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL). CIAL was established as a limited liability company in 1988, and ownership of CIAL is now shared by Christchurch City Holdings Limited with 75% and the New Zealand Government with 25%. The company’s vision is to be recognised as New Zealand’s leading tourist gateway.

Christchurch International Airport is a carbon neutral company and has received carboNZero certification from Landcare Research following a detailed measurement and analysis process. CIAL is the first airport company in the Southern Hemisphere to attain certified carbon neutral status and is the second carbon neutral certified airport company in the world.

Visit christchurchairport.co.nz for more information.