

**13 February 2025**  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Drone traffic management brings safer skies over Lyttelton Port Company**

Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) is transforming how uncrewed air traffic is managed across its operations, through its deployment of the AirShare uncrewed traffic management (UTM) system.

The port's use of AirShare is part of an airspace integration trial being rolled out by AirShare across New Zealand, to support unattended aerodromes and large landowners such as ports to easily monitor and coordinate drone traffic, and provide authorisations as required.

AirShare has been used by Airways New Zealand since 2014 to support safe management of uncrewed aircraft across New Zealand airspace. The UTM system helps to reduce risks related to uncrewed aircraft, and enhances situational awareness for airspace managers and drone pilots.

For LPC, the gateway port to the South Island, the key motivation for integrating AirShare's Airspace Manager into its operations was to improve safety and streamline drone flight approvals.

Drone operations aligned to Civil Aviation Authority Part 101 rules are steadily increasing at the port, as LPC staff deploy drones to gather data around asset condition assessments, monitor environmental conditions, and collect images of port activities. Given that the port is a controlled area, LPC does not permit recreational drone flights over its operations.

Increasing use of drones at the port has identified potential challenges around effective safety risk management, particularly around dedicated no-fly areas within port boundaries and other work activities underway.

AirShare has closely collaborated with LPC to deploy the AirShare UTM onsite. With AirShare now operational at the site, LPC has visibility of all drone flights logged within the airspace around their operation, and has the ability to easily provide authorisation for flights as required.

"AirShare is an important tool for Lyttelton Port Company, enabling our drone pilots to efficiently plan and lodge flight plans," says Lyttelton Port Company Chief Marine and Infrastructure Officer Mike Simmers. "This significantly enhances our Permits Office ability to monitor UAV flights within LPC's airspace, protect our operations and maintain the highest standards of safety," he adds.

## PUBLIC

James Evans, General Manager Commercial (Acting) of Airways International which developed AirShare, says: “It’s great to see Lyttelton Port Company coming on board with this trial of AirShare, as the first port in New Zealand to deploy our UTM. Our aim for AirShare is to keep the skies safe by safely integrating uncrewed traffic into all types of airspace – we see many benefits for ports and similar businesses in utilising AirShare to enhance safety in the airspace around their operations.”

The trial will run for a minimum of three months at LPC and is part of a wider trial involving unattended aerodromes and large landowners throughout New Zealand. There are now 12 unattended aerodromes across New Zealand using AirShare as part of the trial, including Tekapo, Pikes Point, Mechanics Bay and Auckland and North Shore Hospitals.

Trial participants and drone operators will provide feedback to AirShare which will be shared with key stakeholders such as the Civil Aviation Authority and Ministry of Transport, to inform and facilitate future decision-making around uncrewed aircraft flying in New Zealand.

### **Media enquiries:**

021 196 1686

[lpccommunications@lpc.co.nz](mailto:lpccommunications@lpc.co.nz)