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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SIX MONTHS AND 20,000 PEOPLE FLYING WITH AIR CHATHAMS**

Air Chathams has hit the six month mark for its Kāpiti – Auckland route after starting services on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The Kāpiti Coast community has welcomed the airline with open arms. Initial flight schedules have settled after initial trials of flights that had not been offered previously to gauge the community's appetite for those services. Air Chathams is flying 26 flights a week, 7 days a week and as expected the most popular flights are the early morning flight to Auckland and return evening service to Kāpiti Airport to cater for business travellers

During those first six months, the Kāpiti Coast community has backed the airline with 911 flights flown for the period, carrying approximately 20,000 people. Initial discounted fares attracted many to the airline and the average price for a fare for the first six months of operating is under \$140 each way. Positive feedback and comments have reached Air Chathams through Facebook reviews and comments and Duane Emeny, General Manager, is happy with how the service is developing.

"Our recent schedule changes have had a positive effect on shifting our passenger loads to more popular times and lifted average passenger loadings for the initial six months to 67%. We've certainly seen the results of the business travel market and will continue to support the Kāpiti Coast build the region as a leisure and holiday destination. It's trending really well," said Emeny.

Mayor K Gurunathan says the first six months with Air Chathams in Kāpiti has been fantastic, and he looks forward continuing to build a relationship with their staff and wider organisation.

"It's great to see that so many people have got behind Air Chathams to welcome them to Kāpiti, and to make sure they continue to be part of everything that's great about our special part of New Zealand. Just under 1000 flights have flown so far, and around 20,000 people have experienced the great customer services on offer from Air Chathams.

"I personally can't go past the convenience, connections and choice this service provides, knowing I can fly from my back doorstep and do business or visit friends in Auckland on such a direct route. And the Tim Tams don't hurt either."

Flights in and out of Paraparaumu are proving popular for the weekends. As a result Air Chathams is trialling two extra flights starting Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April. The first will be from Auckland to Paraparaumu, leaving at 2:30pm on Saturday and arriving at Kāpiti Airport at 3:55pm. The second flight will leave Paraparaumu at 11:00am on a Sunday and arrive at Auckland Domestic Airport at 12:25pm. Booking is available now.

Air Chathams is renowned for establishing itself as part of the community and to date has provided sponsorship for 16 different organisations, events and community groups. The airline has also just confirmed a two year award category sponsorship with the Electra Kāpiti Horowhenua Business Awards. And recently sponsored the annual Coastella music festival.

Ends.

Images attached:

- i. Mayor Gurunathan with #lovelybeach competition winners. Source – Kapiti Coast District Council.
- ii. Air Chathams Saab 340. Source – Air Chathams.

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