



6 September 2019

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **AIR CHATHAMS FIRST SCHEDULED INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER FLIGHT**

Today Air Chathams went from being the region's largest independently owned airline to providing a long awaited international service direct from Auckland to Norfolk Island. Flying a Convair 580, Craig Emeny, CEO and Owner, and his son, Duane Emeny, General Manager, were the Captain and First Officer for the inaugural flight. Departing Auckland International Airport on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of September at 9:00am marked another milestone for Air Chathams which began in 1985 with one small 5 seat Cessna aircraft.

Air Chathams has been flying to Norfolk Island on a regular basis over the last two years with a range of charter tour groups. The charters have been well patronised and for a week's duration allowing visitors to appreciate the full experience Norfolk Island has to offer. Given the popularity of these charters and the shorter time frame with a direct flight from Auckland, Air Chathams has been working with Norfolk Island Tourism and the Norfolk Island Regional Council for the last 12 months to promote the new route.

"Whilst we have operated internationally in the South Pacific regularly over the past decade. This is the first time our family airline has marketed and operated a scheduled international service under the Air Chathams banner" said Duane Emeny. "Re-connecting Norfolk Island with Auckland fits appropriately with our core values to ensure isolated communities are provided safe, reliable air services to promote growth and connectivity."

The first flight included members of the Air Chathams customer service and management team and a media contingent to cover the historic occasion. Sales have been steady and interest is high with a number of public and customer comments fielded looking forward to the direct flight of just over two hours.

The new route will continue to be serviced by the comfortable and capable Convair 580 aircraft regularly used by Air Chathams for charters and service to the Chatham Islands. Air Chathams will fly to Norfolk weekly on a Friday departing Auckland at 9am and returning same day from Norfolk.

Ends.

For more information and images, please contact:

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