

Press Release 12 October 2009

Trespassing at Paraparaumu Airport.

Paraparaumu Airport Manager, Anthony Wackrow, has expressed concern over a recent increase in the number of trespassers at Paraparaumu Airport. The airport is surrounded by fences with clear signage stating that no unauthorised persons should enter the operational area. Mr. Wackrow explained that trespassing on an airport can be a very dangerous activity for both the individual and aircraft. “The last thing a pilot expects to see while using the runway is a person standing in their way. The likelihood of someone being hurt is greatly increased”.

In the last month the airport authority has stopped several people ‘cutting through’ on their way to work, jogging across the runway, and crossing the active runway while listening to music with headphones on.

Under the provisions of The Civil Aviation Act (Section 51) *persons committing a trespassing offence is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or a fine not exceeding \$2,000.*

At times the Airport has also suffered vandalism to airport infrastructure and aircraft. Mr. Wackrow explained that this is a far greater concern as these actions directly impact on aviation safety.

“We’ve had runway lights broken, bottles and glass left on the runway, and aircraft broken into. These actions could cause a serious accident. If caught the penalties for tampering with aircraft or airport infrastructure are far greater than those for trespassing and include the possibility of serious jail time”.

Paraparaumu Airport Ltd is happy to allow the use of land outside the airport operational area for public access tracks. However, the Airport Authority will be pursuing a full prosecution for any unauthorised persons found within the airport’s operational area.

Mr. Wackrow stated that “the local police have been great at responding to calls concerning trespassing or vandalism at the airport and take the issue of aviation safety seriously.”

Any person sighting an unauthorised person within the operational area of the airport should contact the police or airport management.

End

For further information contact:

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