



# Stakeholder research 2022

Summary version

**KANTAR PUBLIC**

# Objectives and methodology

This research was designed to measure **perceptions of the CAA's strategic performance** and the **quality of the CAA's stakeholder relationships** with a view of delivering insights to enhance stakeholder relationships and help guide the CAA's strategic decision-making on regulatory, service delivery, and communications fronts.



## Online survey

1,992 stakeholders completed a 8 minute online survey. These stakeholders included representatives from the following sectors: air transport, agricultural aviation, other commercial and flight training, private and recreational, maintenance, RPAS, and aviation infrastructure.

The survey covered four key areas:

1. Being safe and feeling safe
2. The CAA's leadership and influence
3. Active regulatory stewardship
4. Professional regulatory practice.

## Qualitative research

Fourteen in-depth interviews were carried out with key stakeholders who were nominated by the CAA. These stakeholders included representatives from both commercial and recreational aviation, existing and emerging technologies, and a range of industry sectors. This enabled researchers to explore in-depth key issues and opportunities.

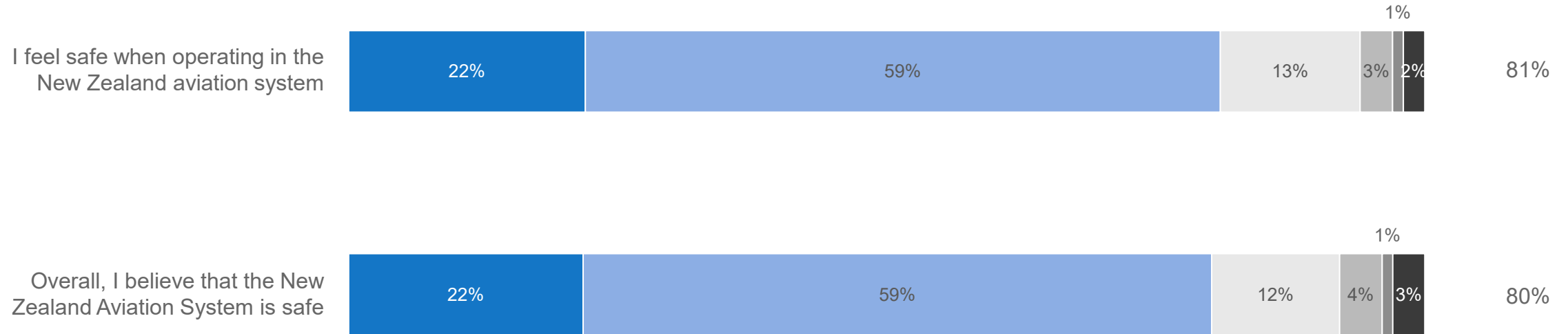
The qualitative research explored:

1. Stakeholder interactions and relationships
2. Perceptions of the CAA's role and activity, including:
  - active regulatory stewardship
  - risk response
  - the CAA as a leader and influencer
  - the CAA as an enabler for new technology and innovation.

**Most stakeholders feel safe operating within the New Zealand aviation system. However there is room to strengthen these feelings of safety – just 22% strongly agree they ‘feel safe operating in the NZ aviation system’ and ‘believe overall the NZ aviation system is safe’.**

Online survey

Strongly agree / agree



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / not applicable

# Those stakeholders who think there is room for improvement, tend to identify one of three areas as their source of concern.

## Qualitative findings

1.

### Gaps between the regulatory framework and modern safety technology

Stakeholders are frustrated when current regulations require them to use safety technology they see as old fashioned and out of date. The older technology can be less effective, more time intensive, and more expensive.

2.

### Gaps between the CAA's interpretation of the regulatory framework and modern aviation technology

Stakeholders are concerned that slow approval processes and slow development of regulation can have significant financial impact on operators – they are losing money on equipment they have already invested in but can't use, or they are missing out on opportunities which new technology could offer them.

3.

### Gaps between the CAA's interpretation of the regulatory framework and commercial pressures

Stakeholders think the CAA's understanding of commercial pressures can discourage safety improvements. For example, stakeholders identify an inconsistent approach to data privacy in the implementation of regulations. They feel that privacy is sometimes stated as reason to deny access to information which could improve safety. Other times they feel commercially sensitive information is required to be shared, which can discourage them from collecting that information.



*You have a sat phone that works anywhere on the globe and it's not good enough. You have to have a 1960s steam powered VHF radio installed and fitted to the aircraft.*

*I have an iPad. In the last few years, we've been able to get legitimate legal maps on the iPad, so I can now use that as my mapping rather than having to use the paper maps. Legally, I'm not allowed to use the GPS and there to plot my position on that map. Ah, I in theory, I suppose it's like the old paper maps, you'd have to put your finger that is where I am. I mean, everyone does it. I understand some of the concerns. But I think they all know that we all do use our GPS to help plug our position. But aviation is not the place to go if you're looking for the latest and greatest technology.*

*I just think it'd be really nice to have the data back the other way for us to make your own decisions for our own business around safety and current trends to say, 'Oh, look, there's been a spike in this, you should we have a look at that', feed it into our safety management system and see what spits out the other end.*

**As two of the stakeholders' key concerns were about the adoption of new technology, they were able to identify a number of ways that the CAA could better facilitate the adoption of technology.**

## Qualitative findings

***Stakeholders identified three key areas for the CAA become a consistent enabler for technological innovation:***

### **1 Use current resources more effectively**

Specifically by:

- working more closely with overseas regulators, sharing data and actively borrowing ideas, learnings, regulations and processes where appropriate
- finding ways to speed up processing times (e.g. better use of administrative data, more efficient processes, outsourcing, clarity around decision making up front) to make new technology economically viable
- ensuring the mandate for technological advancement is recognised within the CAA. This includes making sure the people with the skills are dedicated to emerging technologies rather than seconded to other areas within the CAA.

### **2 Engage with experts**

- Listen and engage more, and more effectively with those who understand the new technology and the opportunities and risks it offers.
- Listen and engage more with those who understand the commercial applications of new technology.

### **3 Add resource**

- Recruit and retain people with the right skills and mindset.
- Be sufficiently resourced to prioritise technological innovation.

**When it comes to their relationship with the people at the CAA, stakeholders are very positive about their relationships with senior management. Stakeholders' experiences with operational staff are more mixed – some really positive and others are negatively impacting the perception of the CAA.**

## Qualitative findings

### Strategic / leadership

Stakeholders generally feel there is a commitment, at a very senior level, to listening to and working with the sector, recognising sector needs and moving forward in partnership. Stakeholders appreciate that Keith Manch has made a significant effort to get to know them, and other senior management are readily available and return calls.



*I think they've got the right leadership at the board and director level. They've got to continue to effect a change agenda. That's going to take time and the industry needs to be able to support that.*

*I do feel like we're treated with a fair amount of respect and trust in terms of what we're trying to achieve.*

### Operational staff

With operational staff, stakeholders are having mixed experiences. Some very good experiences where the CAA's staff are collaborating with them to improve the safety and success of their operation – rather than find fault. And some poor experiences where, for example, the auditor is seen to be autocratic and officious, influenced by their personal opinion and biases, and too focused on minutiae of outdated rules, rather than understanding and addressing the important factors which impact on safety.

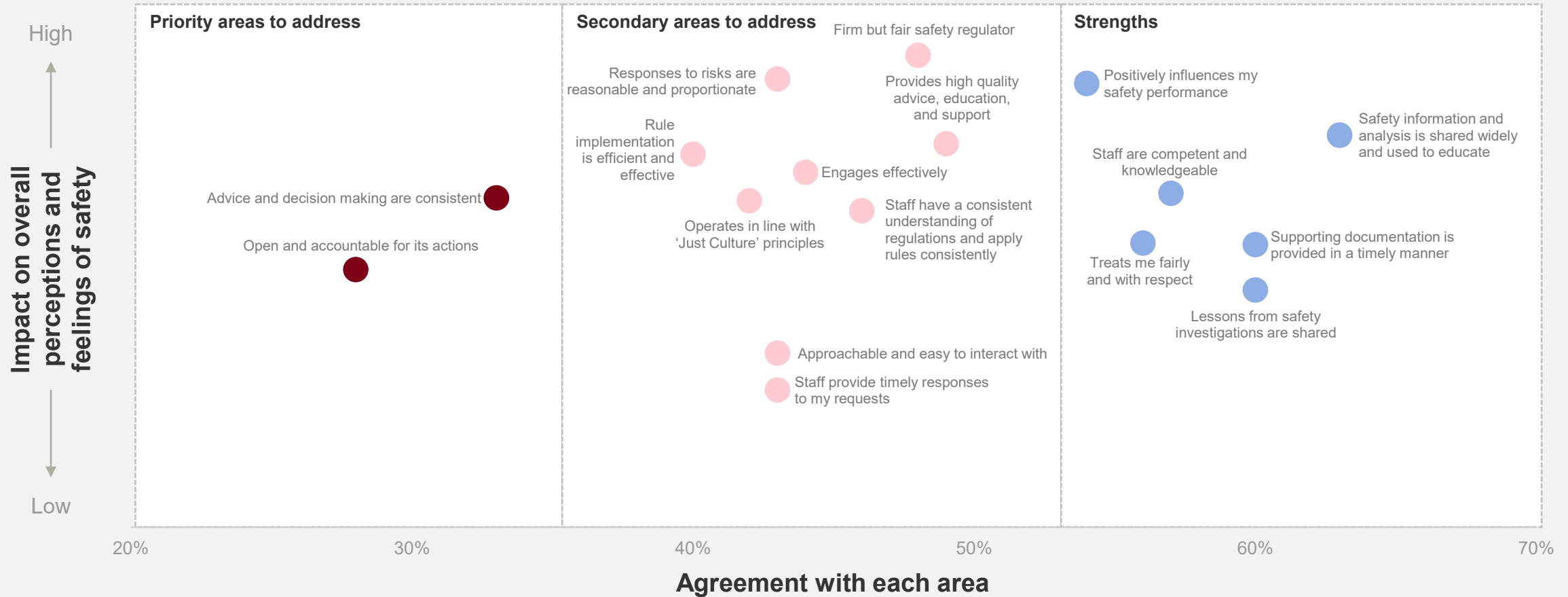


*We've just got our IOC renewed and it was a good experience ... it just made the process so much easier knowing that it wasn't a witch hunt. They were transparent, they didn't leave us guessing ... They gave us really constructive feedback, and I actually ended up walking away from the process feeling like, for the first IOC renewal ever it was something worth going through.*

*When individuals come into the organisation with strong individual views, and are conducting an audit it can have quite a big impact, so that is a challenge ... clarity on decision making criteria would help, they need to clarify the difference between personal views and organisational views.*

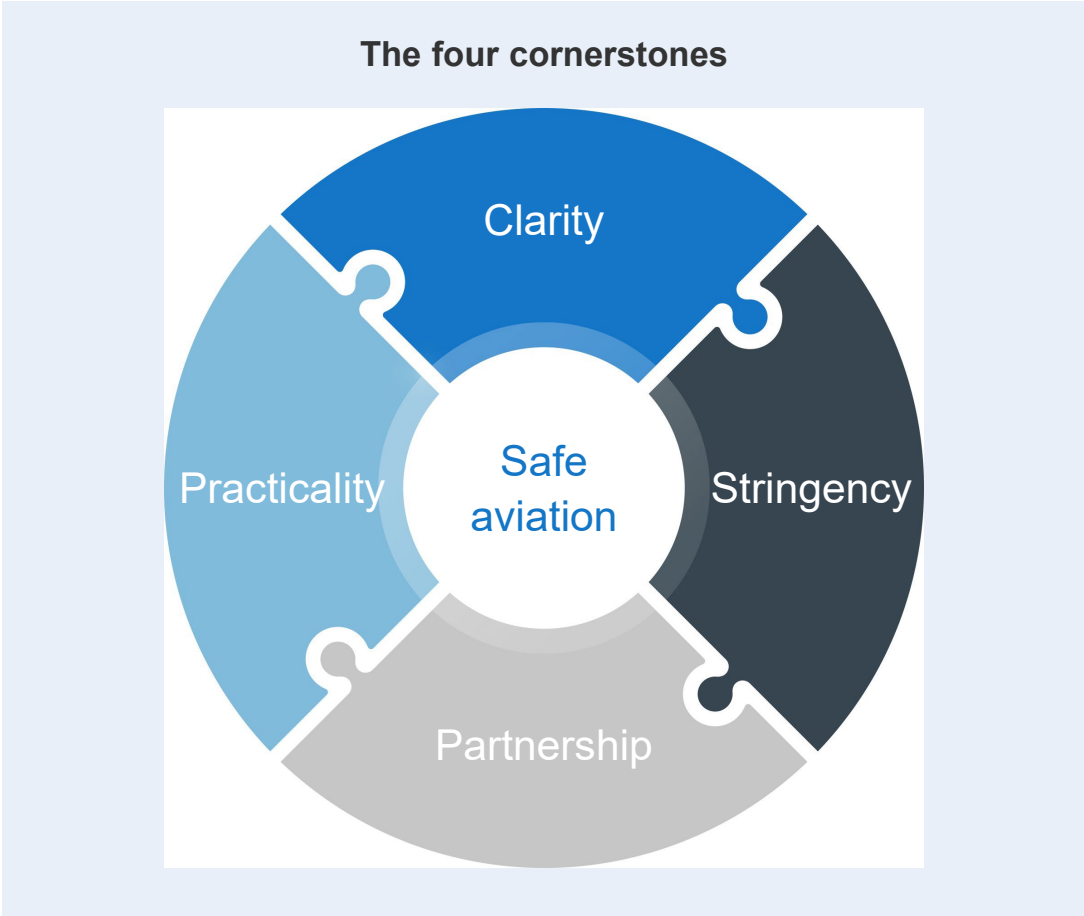
Stakeholders' inconsistent experiences with operational staff came through in the survey – with 'advice and decision making are consistent' emerging as one priority area to improve. The other priority to improve ('being open and accountable') speaks to the desire of stakeholders to be a partner, this is explained in the next two pages. It is also worth noting that the CAA has more strengths than priority areas to improve.

### Driver analysis – online survey



When stakeholders talked about what they wanted from the CAA, some strong themes emerged. We've called these the 'four cornerstones of an effective and efficient regulator' – each of the cornerstones is inter-dependent.

Qualitative findings



### Clarity

Stakeholders want clarity on what they will be assessed on and a clearly defined process. At present they find that sometimes the CAA's staff are not interpreting or implementing the rules in a consistent manner and this can lead to situations that they feel are unfair, and sometimes to risk responses that they feel are disproportionate. They say that focusing on the **intent** of a rule is the key to clarity, rather than focusing solely on the words of a rule.



*An example is when making amendments compliance certificate AC 43-9. (CAA) Need to be open about why they are making these changes, why is it needed. How it will improve safety.*

### Stringency

On the whole stakeholders feel day to day compliance is a manageable task, and the effort and input required from them is proportionate to the importance of maintaining a safe operation. They think that compliance being difficult is a good thing.



*Compliance is probably hard in NZ, but that's good, because that's what we want. We want to be able to say that if we're certified in NZ that means something. It's important to us that it's a credible certification.*



# Partnership and Practicality are the remaining two cornerstones.

## Qualitative findings

### Partnership

When a new rule is being developed stakeholders want to see strong consultation with the sector to ensure that:

- the new rule meets sector needs
- the sector understands why the new rule is being made, what problems it is designed to solve
- people know what to expect, and can prepare.

Some stakeholders feel the CAA performs well in forming partnerships with the sector. The replacement of the Auckland airport runway was cited as one really successful example. Another successful example was the change to the medical standards. The success factors for the change to medical standards were the long time frames and the clarity of the material (particularly the diagrams).



*The more they can understand and embed themselves in the processes, the better place they are in, to be able to feel comfortable to approve them at place. When they have had people work closely with people across the sector, that's been really effective.*

### Practicality

Stakeholders stress the importance of a pragmatic, problem solving approach, with some flexibility in interpretation and implementation, in order to address issues with what some feel is an outdated regulatory framework.

Stakeholders feel that some flexibility is appropriate, given the need to recognise the uniqueness of different situations and to ensure a pragmatic, problem solving approach. Similarly to Clarity, stakeholders think that the key to practicality is to understand the **intent** of a rule, rather than solely focus on the wording of the rule.



*We seem to be dealing with things that aren't related to safety. They're just related to rules.*

*There's a term in the industry called normalised deviance, and that becomes a normalised deviance, and you're a breach of the rule, you know, you're in breach of the rule, but it doesn't matter because the rule's an ass, okay, but you can't change it. But every now and again, one of the auditors will come along and pick up on that.*



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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