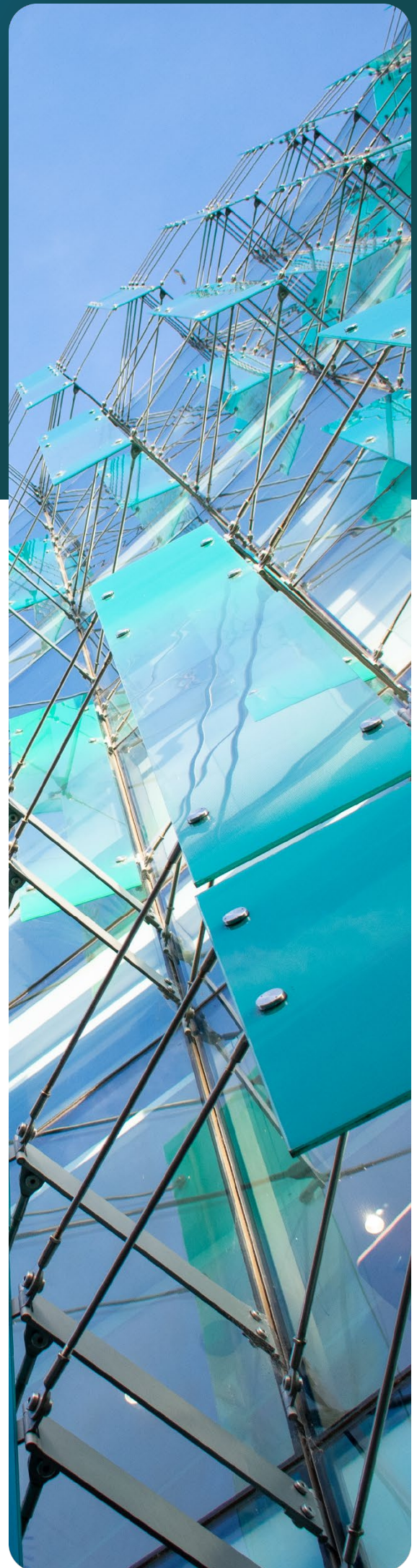


deciphər

Air Whanganui – Chief Executive Officer

Position Description and
Additional Information

April 2026



Air Whanganui Limited | Position Description | Chief Executive Officer

Role Title	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Reporting to	The Board of Directors through the Chair
Direct Reports	Training Manager, Operations Manager, Safety Manager (the Senior Leadership Team), and Company Accountant
Location	Whanganui, New Zealand

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- Board of Directors
- Senior Leadership Team
- Operational and Flight Crew

External

- Clients and prospective clients including Health NZ and ACC
- Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)
- Luxury wholesale inbound tourism operators and luxury accommodation providers
- Community stakeholders

POSITION PURPOSE

The CEO is responsible for leading Air Whanganui to deliver sustainable growth, operational excellence, and long-term value, while honouring its legacy as a trusted aviation provider.

This role balances commercial performance with purpose, ensuring the organisation continues to provide critical aeromedical services while expanding its commercial charter offering. The CEO will drive strategic growth across both revenue streams, with a particular focus on reducing reliance on public sector funding by strengthening and diversifying charter services.

Operating in a highly regulated environment, the CEO will champion a strong safety culture, ensure full compliance with aviation standards, and lead the organisation with integrity, professionalism, and accountability.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Strategic Leadership and Direction

Provide clear strategic direction that positions Air Whanganui for sustainable growth and resilience.

Key Expectations:

- Lead the development and execution of a clear, future-focused strategy aligned to both commercial and “for purpose” objectives.
- Identify emerging risks, challenges, and opportunities, and develop strategies to mitigate or leverage these.
- Balance growth ambitions with operational capability, safety, and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure the organisation remains adaptive in a changing healthcare, tourism, and aviation landscape.

Growth and Commercial Development

Drive revenue growth and diversification across aeromedical and charter services.

Key Expectations:

- Expand commercial charter revenue.
- Identify and develop new market opportunities, including direct engagement with end-users such as luxury lodges and luxury tourism operators.
- Strengthen and grow relationships with luxury wholesale inbound tourism operators and intermediaries while developing alternative distribution channels.
- Explore opportunities to grow aeromedical transfer services in alignment with sector demand.
- Lead innovation in service offerings to enhance competitiveness and customer value.

Leadership and Culture

Lead and inspire a high-performing, safety-focused organisational culture.

Key Expectations:

- Provide visible, values-based leadership that reflects the organisation's legacy and purpose.
- Build capability across the organisation, fostering accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Promote a culture where safety, professionalism, and customer service excellence are embedded in all operations.
- Support and develop leaders within the business to ensure succession and sustainability.

Safety, Risk and Compliance

Ensure the highest standards of aviation safety and regulatory compliance.

Key Expectations:

- Champion a proactive safety culture aligned with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) requirements.
- Ensure all operations meet or exceed regulatory and industry standards.
- Oversee robust risk management systems, with particular focus on operational and safety risks.
- Maintain strong relationships with regulatory bodies and ensure readiness for audits and compliance reviews.

Financial Stewardship

Ensure sound financial management and long-term financial sustainability.

Key Expectations:

- Lead financial planning, budgeting, and performance monitoring.
- Ensure efficient use of resources while maintaining high service and safety standards.
- Drive profitability across commercial operations while sustaining essential services.
- Provide clear financial reporting and insights to the Board.

Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

Build and maintain strong, trusted relationships with key stakeholders.

Key Expectations:

- Proactively manage strategic relationships with Health New Zealand, ACC, and other government stakeholders.
- Engage with Health New Zealand, the Ministry of Health and relevant agencies to contribute to and help shape policy and service delivery models for aeromedical and patient transfer services.

- Engage effectively with clients, intermediaries, and commercial partners.
- Build partnerships with tourism operators, including luxury lodges and high-end service providers.
- Maintain positive relationships with the Civil Aviation Authority and other regulatory bodies.
- Represent Air Whanganui as a credible and respected industry leader.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

To be successful as the CEO, you will hold the following experience, qualifications and attributes:

Leadership and Experience

- Proven senior leadership experience, ideally in aviation, transport, logistics, or another highly regulated industry
- Experience balancing commercial performance with purpose-driven outcomes

Safety and Regulatory Understanding

- Strong understanding of safety management systems and operating in a regulated environment
- Experience engaging with regulatory bodies and maintaining compliance standards

Commercial and Strategic Capability

- Proven track record in business development and revenue growth
- Ability to identify and execute new market opportunities

Stakeholder and Relationship Management

- Highly developed relationship management and influencing skills
- Experience working with government agencies, commercial partners, and diverse stakeholders

Financial and Operational Acumen

- Strong financial literacy, including budgeting and performance management
- Understanding of operational environments, ideally including logistics or aviation

Qualifications

- Tertiary qualification in business, management, aviation, or a related field (preferred)
- Relevant industry or leadership development credentials advantageous

Personal Attributes

- Authentic, values-driven leader with high integrity
- Commercially astute with a growth mindset
- Calm and decisive under pressure
- Strong communicator with the ability to engage and inspire
- Pragmatic, adaptable, and solutions-focused

Our process



OUTREACH AND ADVERTISING | Applications close 21 May 2026

Potential candidates identified through targeted search; applications reviewed and responded to.



APPLICANT SCREENING | Late May / Early June

Initial screening of applications as they are received. This may include a discussion with candidates about their motivations for applying. We aim to run a timely and efficient process.



SELECTING AND SHORTLISTING | Mid June

Once the role has closed our team will present the most qualified candidates to the client. Within this period, all applicants will receive notification of the status of their application.



CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS | Mid-End June

Decipher Group prioritises a robust and consistent interview framework, based on a behavioural and competency-based assessment. Candidates will be advised of the interview structure and who will be present on the panel. All interviewed candidates will receive prompt feedback and will be advised of next steps once we have debriefed with the interview panel.



VETTING AND DUE DILIGENCE | Early July

We conduct thorough background checks and referencing to further assess competencies of preferred candidate/s. Decipher Group utilises a third-party provider for pre-employment and probity checks such as criminal history, qualification, employment history and bankruptcy. Our team will notify you in advance prior to us contacting your referees. Throughout the entire process, candidate confidentiality and privacy remain an absolute priority.



DECISION AND ONBOARDING | Early-Mid July

Following a rigorous evaluation, a conditional offer of employment will be made, subject to the completion of the above stage. Our team will communicate regularly with both the client and the successful candidate during this period. At the conclusion of the recruitment process, all remaining candidates will be notified, with the opportunity for feedback.

Chief Executive Officer – Rare and exciting role

- Lead a trusted aeromedical and charter aviation business
- Drive growth and diversify revenue streams
- Champion safety, performance, and purpose

About the organisation | Air Whanganui

Air Whanganui has been serving the Whanganui community and wider region for almost 40 years, delivering essential aeromedical and patient transfer services that play a vital role in New Zealand's healthcare system. These services are supported by a small, well-maintained fleet of King Air aircraft.

Alongside this, the organisation operates a high-quality, nationwide charter service from its centrally located base, utilising a recently acquired Cessna Citation jet to support a diverse range of clients across New Zealand.

As a “for purpose” and “for profit” organisation, Air Whanganui combines meaningful community impact with commercial ambition, creating a unique platform for growth and innovation. The rare opportunity to lead this unique organisation as the Chief Executive Officer has arisen and we are looking for a talented professional with a passion for the aviation industry to join the team. Sound like you?

The opportunity and role

Reporting to the Board of Directors, this is a significant leadership opportunity to guide Air Whanganui through its next phase of growth and development. Leading a close-knit and highly capable team, the CEO will be responsible for setting and delivering strategy, strengthening operational performance, and ensuring the highest standards of safety and compliance.

A key priority will be driving revenue growth, particularly through expanding the charter business.

Based at Whanganui Airport, this role offers the opportunity to lead a respected organisation with both community impact and commercial potential. As the CEO, your accountabilities will include:

- Providing strategic leadership and delivering a clear, future-focused direction for the organisation.
- Continuing the leadership of a strong, safety-first culture aligned with CAA requirements.
- Driving growth across both aeromedical and charter services, with a focus on commercial expansion.
- Ensuring 24/7 delivery excellence across existing contracts and client relationships
- Providing sound financial stewardship and performance oversight
- Working closely with the Chair and Board to achieve strategic and organisational outcomes

About you

Commercial capability | Safety focus | Strong leadership

To be successful as the CEO, you will be a proven senior leader with the ability to balance strategic thinking with hands-on execution in a complex, safety-critical environment. You will bring strong commercial acumen and a track record of driving growth, alongside a genuine appreciation for purpose-driven services.

Your key attributes include:

- Demonstrated experience in senior leadership, ideally within aviation, transport, logistics, or another regulated industry
- Strong understanding of safety, risk, and compliance frameworks
- Proven success in business development and revenue growth
- Strategic mindset with the ability to translate vision into practical outcomes
- Highly developed stakeholder engagement and relationship management skills, including advocacy and input into policy
- Financial and operational leadership capability

In addition, you will have a true passion for the aviation industry and be motivated by this exciting opportunity. If this sounds like you, please get in touch for a discussion.

How to apply

For a copy of the position description view this role at <https://deciphergroup.co.nz/job-opportunities/chief-executive-officer-2/>

To discover more about Air Whanganui, visit www.airwhanganui.co.nz/

For a confidential discussion about the role, contact Deb Vaughan at Decipher Group on 022 850 0188 or by email to deb@deciphergroup.co.nz

Applications close: Thursday 21st May 2026

Please do not email us your CV and Cover Letter.
Please use the *Apply Now* link on our website.



Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

Decipher Group care deeply about helping individuals achieve their full potential and supporting organisations to thrive by working toward a more progressive future.

Fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging that truly values individual differences, backgrounds, and perspectives ignites creativity and new ideas – and this is part of what makes our team exceptional. For us, progress is the only goal worth benchmarking.

deciphər

PO Box 239, Christchurch 8140
Level 4, 151 Cambridge Terrace

deciphergroup.co.nz
admin@deciphergroup.co.nz

021 245 2224