

Submission on developing the Aotearoa New Zealand Aerospace Strategy

Your name and organisation

Name	Richard Suggate
Organisation (if applicable)	

Overview of the Aerospace Strategy

- Question 1:** Do the four areas above provide the right basis for the Aerospace Strategy?
- Question 2:** What are the critical factors that you see for aerospace sector development?
- Question 3:** How would an Aerospace Strategy help you?

Please type your submission below. If applicable, please indicate the question(s) to which you are responding.

While there are multiple references throughout the document to economic development, economic benefits, “productivity” and “the global aerospace economy”, there is not a single reference to three crucial areas that must be the basis for the developing NZ aerospace industry:

i) Peaceful uses of space: there is no reference to NZ’s commitment to peaceful uses of space, both generally as a member of the international community and specifically as a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 2016. The Committee was established in 1959 “to govern the exploration and use of space for the benefit of all humanity: for peace, security and development” and to promote “international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space”.

ii) Disarmament obligations: there is no reference at all to NZ’s domestic or international disarmament obligations, which is a particular concern with regard to prohibited weapons, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as cluster munitions and other weapon systems with inhumane and indiscriminate effects that are prohibited by NZ law. Related to this, there is no reference in the draft Strategy to NZ’s obligations under humanitarian and human rights law.

iii) Disarmament policy: there is no reference to NZ’s disarmament policy, which includes both a commitment “to show leadership in the development of new rules, norms and standards around the use of outer space”, and a commitment to “new international law to ban and regulate autonomous weapons systems” (also known as killer robots) - this is particularly pertinent to this Strategy given the references to “autonomous aerial vehicles”, to “safely integrate all forms of autonomous aerial vehicles” and, disturbingly, “significant work has already been undertaken to establish New Zealand’s leadership in this area, which we will progress further for 2030”.

It is absolutely crucial that the new Aerospace Strategy includes meaningful references to each of these areas to ensure that aerospace companies based in Aotearoa do not develop - or contribute to the development of - any technologies, aircraft or spacecraft that are contrary to any of NZ's obligations and commitments to ensure that space is only used for peaceful purposes.

It would help me and my descendants if it was rigorously tied to the peaceful use of space.