

Archerfield Airport to open \$4 million student centre

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[Cameron Atfield](#) - Brisbane Times and Sun-Herald journalist



Archerfield Airport general manager Corrie Metz hopes a new \$4million training and accommodation centre will breathe new life in to the airport. *Photo: Robert Shakespeare*

A new student aviation centre at Archerfield Airport has the airport's boss hopeful it can put aside recent disappointments to reach new heights.

The \$4 million pilot training and accommodation centre, which has been under construction since November, should be completed next month.

Archerfield Airport Corporation general manager Corrie Metz said the facility would breathe new life into the suburban airfield, which recently suffered a blow when a deal to [introduce regular passenger services fell through](#).

He said the benefits would be felt beyond the confines of the airport, in Brisbane's south-west.

"I can see it improving the economy of south-east Queensland if we get people from overseas. Those overseas students will want to get involved in various community activities, so it'll have a flow-on effect to the community," Mr Metz said.

"On airport, we'll have an increased rate of flying with the flying school, which will flow on to the refuellers and the maintenance companies, so it'll be very positive in all those areas."

The training centre will include 40 single rooms, a commercial kitchen, offices, classrooms and conference rooms.

But Mr Metz said the highlight would be a viewing platform located on the roof.

“It will give a 360 degree view of the airport, but it will also have radios tuned to tower frequencies so the students can get good situational awareness listening to the circuit traffic,” he said.

Sydney-based aviation college Basair has signed a 10-year lease for the property, but other aviation schools will also use the building.

“They’ll make rooms available and they’ve already given me clearance to do that with some of the other flying schools,” Mr Metz said.

“It’ll be for [Basair] to manage – they will be paying the rent on it – so it’ll be up to them how they manage that.”

Basair Aviation College chief operating officer Mark Rowell said it was a matter of good timing to set up in Brisbane.

“We looked at the Sunshine Coast initially and found it was probably a little too far for people to travel to get to Maroochydore,” he said.

“I think we were in the right place at the right time when we met Corrie and he showed us the facility and we did everything we possibly could to secure it.”

Mr Rowell said the school hoped to attract students from around the world to Archerfield.

“We used to have a huge market in India, but with the high Australian dollar that dropped off quite substantially,” he said.

“But our international students, a lot of them come from Malaysia, Indonesia, we’ve got students at the moment from East Timor, Papua New Guinea, so it’s mainly Asian countries.

“We do have a few European students, who come from Switzerland and France, because it’s cheaper to learn to fly in Australia and they prefer Australia to America.”

Mr Rowell said, to his knowledge, there was no other facility in Australia quite like it.

“It’s very unique in having the accommodation right above where the operations will be,” he said.

“So they’ll get out of bed in the morning, walk downstairs and they’ll be at school.”

Extracted from: <http://www.smh.com.au/business/aviation/archerfield-airport-to-open-4-million-student-centre-20140802-zzixz.html>

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