

MEDIA RELEASE



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Airport employees walk the runways of Australia and New Zealand for annual event

Airport Safety Week's highly anticipated Foreign Object Debris (FOD) walk is taking place today at airports across Australia and New Zealand.

Airports will be inviting staff to take part in the event, with some extending the invitation to members of the local community.

AAA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the FOD walk was an important part of Airport Safety Week.

"This event is designed to bring airport employees together and highlight safety procedures that may not be part of their job but are critically important for the safe operation of the airport," Ms Wilkie said.

"With some airports inviting members of the community to their events, it also informs others about airport employees safety work taking place behind the scenes."

FOD is any foreign object that does not belong on the runway, taxiway, or ramp area.

FOD can potentially cause damage to aircraft engine, making its management an important and ongoing focus for airports across the country.

Typical FOD items may include tire fragments, luggage parts, stones or small items of rubbish.

Strict safety measures are in place to avoid any dangers on airport runways, with airports implementing FOD prevention plans to ensure a constant focus on this important safety issue every day of the year.

A variety of tools are used to find and remove FOD, including visual inspections and the use of sweepers, vacuums and magnet bars to collect debris.

The FOD walk forms part of the many activities taking place to mark Airport Safety Week 2018.

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This year's theme is 'walk in my shoes' which encourages staff to experience airport life from a different point of view.

Thousands of airport employees at more than 150 airports and aerodromes across Australia and New Zealand are taking part in this year's Airport Safety Week.

"We have had a huge response to Airport Safety Week, with airports hosting a variety of events including tours of the airfield, air traffic control towers and aviation rescue firefighting," Ms Wilkie said.

"Participants are also finding out how different roles contribute to safety in many different ways such as biosecurity, customs and aerodrome reporting officers."

Established in 2014, Airport Safety Week has grown each year to raise awareness of airport safety.

The annual safety campaign is a collaboration between the Australian Airports Association (AAA), NZ Airports Association, Airservices Australia and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and is specifically tailored to engage with employees and contractors working on an aerodrome.

Airport Safety Week takes place from 15-19 October.

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