



SAMOA AIRWAYS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

Samoa Airways operates in a small island, high-cost aviation environment characterized by:

- **Limited scale**
- **Exposure to fluctuating fuel cost, fleet availability, and currency exchange risks**
- **Strong regulatory and safety obligations**
- **High public and political visibility**

The CEO is expected to operate with **commercial realism, public sector accountability, and strong stakeholder management skills**. In elaborating on this expectation, the CEO will be responsible for:

- Developing and implementing a **sustainable airline strategy**
- Driving organizational and cultural transformation
- Restoring operational reliability and regulatory compliance
- Leading financial stabilization and performance discipline
- Engaging proactively with key stakeholders, including Government, regulators, unions, partners, diaspora, and communities

POSITION PURPOSE

The Chief Executive Officer of Samoa Airways will lead the strategic transition of the national carrier from its current inter-Samoa Twin Otter operations to a phased introduction of Jet aircraft and international services, initially targeting the New Zealand and Australian markets. The role requires a highly experienced aviation executive capable of balancing operational stability, safety, regulatory compliance, and financial discipline while delivering staged commercial growth.

This is a transformational “build and transition” leadership position. The CEO will be responsible not only for maintaining safe and reliable current operations but also for designing and executing a structured expansion strategy that aligns fleet acquisition, workforce capability, operational readiness, financial sustainability, and international regulatory compliance.

Given the complexity of transitioning to jet and international operations, the position demands strong aviation visionary leadership experience, sound commercial judgement, change management capability, disciplined corporate governance, and the ability to foster a high-performance organizational culture that delivers service excellence, operational reliability, and long-term value.

The CEO must operate with a high degree of accountability to the Government, Board and Shareholders while safeguarding the national interest, the airline’s reputation, and long-term financial viability.

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for leading the strategic reset and relaunch of its Jet Operations, restructuring, and long-term financial sustainability of Samoa Airways as a safe, commercially disciplined, and nationally strategic airline.

The role carries an explicit start-up and relaunch of Jet Operations and change management, requiring the CEO to stabilize operations, redesign the operating and financial model, rebuild organisational capability, renegotiate licensing and regulatory aviation agreement, and restore confidence among staff, regulators, partners, and the Government of Samoa.

POSITION DETAILS

Position Title: Chief Executive Officer

Term of Appointment: 3 Years

REMUNERATION, CONDITIONS & ENTITLEMENTS (South Pacific Airline Context)

The salary package is negotiable based on knowledge, skills and attributes and is comparable to the South Pacific Airline context. For further information, please contact the Chairman of the Samoa Airways Board of Directors.

Location:

CEO Role in the Reform Programme

During the restructuring phase, the CEO will:

- a) Be a standing member of the Technical Working Group
- b) Lead development of:
 - Strategic options
 - Operating model design
 - Workforce and organisational structure
- c) Own implementation planning and risk management

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Chief Executive Officer is accountable to the Board of Directors (or Interim Governance Body transitioning to the Board) for the overall strategic, operational, financial, safety, regulatory and organisational performance of Samoa Airways.

Direct Reporting

The following positions report directly to the CEO (subject to approved structure):

- Chief Finance Manager/Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Counsel/Board Secretary
- Manager Internal Audit
- Other Senior Management positions when required

Internal Relationships

- Board of Directors
- Executive Management Team
- All departmental Managers and staff
- Flight Operations personnel
- Engineering and Maintenance teams
- Ground Operations and Customer Services
- Safety, Security and Compliance functions

- Finance, People and Culture, ICT, Internal Audit and Board administration
- Commercial Operations

External Relationships

- Government of Samoa/Shareholding Ministries
- Civil Aviation Authority of Samoa
- International Civil Aviation regulatory and oversight agencies
- Airports, border control and customs authorities
- Airline partners and codeshare/interline shareholders
- Aircraft lessors and OEMs
- Financial institutions, insurers, and auditors
- Tourism sector stakeholders
- Employee Association and employee representatives (where applicable)
- Customers, suppliers, service providers, and the travelling public
- Media and public stakeholders

KEY RESULTS AREAS

1. Strategic Leadership and Corporate Direction
2. Governance and Board Accountability
3. Operational Performance and Airline Readiness
4. Financial Sustainability and Commercial Performance
5. Safety, Security and Regulatory Compliance
6. Organisational Leadership and Culture
7. Stakeholder and Government Relations
8. Brand, Customer and Public Confidence
9. Risk Management and Business Continuity
10. Organisational Growth and Transformation.

DUTIES AND MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Strategic Leadership and Change Management

The CEO will lead the structured transformation of Samoa Airways from a Twin Otter operator between the two Samoa into a jet-capable international airline, ensuring the transition is phased, safe, financially sustainable, and organizationally embedded.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive Transformation Roadmap outlining the phased introduction of jet aircraft and international services.
- Lead enterprise-wide change management to align people, systems, processes, and culture with expanded operational complexity.
- Ensure that transformation initiatives are supported by clear financial modelling, operational readiness assessments, and risk analysis.
- Integrate fleet acquisition, route planning, workforce development, infrastructure readiness, and regulatory compliance into a coordinated implementation plan.
- Established structured change governance mechanisms, including milestone tracking and performance reporting.
- Manage organizational risk during transition, ensuring current operations remain stable and compliant.
- Embed a culture of accountability, performance, and safety throughout the transformation period.
- Provide regular progress updates to the Airline Taskforce, Board, Cabinet and Shareholder on transformation milestones and risks.

B. Establish a Clear Strategic Direction

The CEO will define and articulate a coherent long-term strategic direction that balances national objectives, commercial sustainability, and operational capability.

- Develop and execute a rolling 3-5 year Corporate Strategy aligned to Government expectations and shareholder priorities.
- Define the airline's business model, including fleet strategy, route network design, partnerships, and service positioning.
- Establish measurable strategic objectives and key performance indicators across safety, operations, financial performance, and customer service.
- Ensure strategic decisions are grounded in robust market analysis, demand forecasting, and competitive assessment.
- Align organizational structure, capital investment, and workforce planning with the approved strategy.
- Communicate the strategic direction clearly to staff, Government, regulators, and external stakeholders
- Periodically review and adjust strategy in response to market conditions, regulatory developments, and financial performance.
- Safeguard the long-term viability and reputation of the national carrier through disciplined strategic decision-making.

C. Operational Excellence & Safety

The CEO will ensure that all flight and ground operations are conducted safely, efficiently, and in full compliance with aviation regulations.

- Ensure all flight operations comply with national and international aviation safety standards and regulatory requirements (Samoa aviation laws and ICAO).
- Maintain strict oversight of aircraft airworthiness, maintenance, and engineering support arrangements.
- Ensure operational reliability of current domestic and regional services, including scheduling discipline and on-time performance.
- Establish and enforce Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) across all operational areas, including flight operations. Ground handling, and safety management.
- Strengthen quality assurance, and internal safety audit systems.
- Ensure the Safety Management System (SMS) is active, effective, and regularly reviewed.
- Build operational capability progressively to support any future fleet or route expansion approved by Government.
- Promote a culture of safety as a core organizational value.

D. Financial Sustainability

The CEO will be responsible for ensuring the airline operates on a financially disciplined and sustainable basis.

- Prepare and implement annual budgets and multi-year financial plans.
- Maintain strict cost control measures appropriate for a small airline environment.
- Improve revenue management practices for existing routes.
- Monitor cash flow, liquidity, and financial performance on a regular basis.
- Ensure procurement practices deliver value for money and transparency.
- Identify opportunities for commercial partnerships, interline arrangements, or charter services where

viable.

- Prepare and submit within the statutory time-frame the following:
 - i. Annual report (including audited financial statements) to the Board and Parliament as stipulated in the relevant Act(s) governing the operations of the Airways;
 - ii. Annual budget based on the requirements of the Airways from time to time;
 - iii. Quarterly reports to the Ministry for Public Enterprises and other relevant key stakeholders;
 - Work closely with Government and the relevant funding work stream on capital planning and investment proposals.
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E. People, Culture & Industrial Relations

The CEO will lead the development of capable, disciplined, and service-oriented workforce.

- Establish a clear organizational structure with defined roles and reporting lines.
 - Recruit and retain suitably qualified personnel in operational, technical, and administrative roles.
 - Build a professional organizational culture based on accountability, teamwork, and customer service.
 - Ensure all staff are trained in policies, SOPs, and operational procedures.
 - Promote leadership development and succession planning, and appropriate HR strategies to entice and retain qualified people.
 - Assess and review staff salaries and other employment benefits and entitlements taking into account inflation and changes in government relevant policy directives.
 - Maintain fair and constructive relations with employees and any representative bodies.
 - Ensure compliance with labour legislation (LERA) and employment contracts.
 - Address workforce morale, engagement, and retention challenges proactively.
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F. Stakeholder & External Relations

The CEO will represent the airline professionally and maintain constructive relationships with key stakeholders.

- Maintain strong working relationships with Government, the Board, and aviation regulators.
 - Engage regularly with airport authorities, aviation partners, and service providers.
 - Represent the airline in regional aviation forums and industry discussions where appropriate.
 - Build public confidence in the airline through transparent communication and reliable services.
 - Strengthen relationships with tourism stakeholders, travel agents, and commercial partners.
 - Support national connectivity objectives and economic development priorities where commercially viable.
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G. Governance & Accountability

The CEO will ensure the airline operates in accordance with sound governance principles and established policies.

- Collaborate effectively with Ministers and Cabinet, Board and other Government Agencies.
- Implement Board decisions and strategic directives in a timely and effective manner.
- Provide accurate and timely reports on operational, financial, and safety performance.
- Establish internal controls, risk management systems, and compliance frameworks.
- Ensure procurement, financial management, and contracting processes are transparent and auditable.
- Maintain corporate records, policies, and operational documentation.
- Ensure adherence to all statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Promote ethical conduct and integrity across the organization.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

I. Strategic Leadership & Change Management (Transformation) - Indicative KPIs

Performance will be assessed against progress in implementing the airline's transition and transformation programme.

a) Transformation Roadmap

- Development and Board approval of a comprehensive Transformation Roadmap within agreed timeframe.
- Achievement of key transformation milestones according to the approved schedule.

b) Operational readiness

- Completion of operational, technical, and workforce readiness milestones for jet operations within agreed timelines.
- Implementation of required Standard Operating Procedures and operational systems.

c) Change Implementation

- Implementation of agreed organizational structure and management systems.
- Successful introduction of performance management and reporting systems across departments.

d) Risk and Transition Management

- Identification and mitigation of key operational and organizational risks during transition.
- Maintenance of stable and reliable current operations during transformation.

e) Governance of Transformation

- Regular progress reports provided to the Technical Working Group, Board, Cabinet and Shareholder.
- Timely escalation of major risks, delays, or funding issues.

f) Cultural and Organisational Alignment

- Evidence of improved organizational discipline, accountability, and operational compliance.
- Staff training and change communication programmes implemented.

II. Establishing a Clear Strategic Direction – Indicative KPIs

Performance will be assessed against the CEO's effectiveness in developing and implementing a coherent and achievable strategy.

a) Corporate Strategy Development

- Development and Board approval of a rolling 3-5 year Corporate Strategy within an agreed timeframe.
- Annual Strategic Plan aligned with approved corporate objectives.

b) Strategic Planning and Analysis

- Completion of business cases for fleet acquisition, route expansion, and major investments.
- Use of financial modelling and market analysis to support strategic decisions.

c) Alignment of Organisation to Strategy

- Workforce plans, organization structures, and operational plans aligned with strategic priorities.
- Integration of financial, operational, and risk planning into strategic decision-making.

d) Strategic Milestone Delivery

- Achievement of agreed strategic milestones such as:
- Route readiness

- Fleet planning approvals
- Regulatory readiness
- Commercial partnership development

e) Communication of Strategy

- Clear communication of strategic direction to staff and key stakeholders
- Evidence of management and staff understanding of strategic priorities.

f) Strategic Review and Adaptation

- Periodic review of strategy and adjustments based on market, financial, or operational realities.
- Evidence of proactive rather than reactive strategic management.

III. Safety and Compliance

- Zero major safety breaches attributable to management or systemic failure.
- All regulatory audits completed with satisfactory outcomes.
- Safety Management System functioning effectively and reviewed regularly.
- Compliance with all aviation, statutory, and corporate governance requirements.

IV. Operational Performance

- On-time performance targets achieved - as agreed annually with the Board.
- Flight completion and schedule reliability maintained at agreed standards.
- Operational readiness milestones achieved for jet aircraft introduction.
- Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures across all operational areas.

V. Financial Performance and Sustainability

- Achievement of approved annual budget targets within agreed variance levels.
- Improvement in cost control indicators and operating efficiency.
- Cash flow and liquidity maintained within agreed thresholds.
- Business cases and financial modelling for fleet and route expansion completed on schedule.

VI. Strategic and Transition Milestones

- Delivery of key milestones in the airline transition roadmap.
- Readiness for international operations achieved within agreed timelines.
- Implementation of approved corporate strategy and work stream outputs.

VII. People and Organisational Development

- Staff retention levels within acceptable targets, particularly in critical technical roles.
- Implementation of workforce plan for future operational requirements.
- Staff training and competency programmes implemented.
- Improvement in staff engagement and organizational culture indicators.

VIII. Stakeholder and Commercial Development

- Maintenance of effective working relationships with Government, regulators, and aviation partners.
- Development of commercial partnerships and revenue opportunities.
- Positive public and stakeholder confidence indicators.

IX. Governance and Reporting

- Timely submission of accurate operational and financial reports to the Board.
- Effective implementation of Technical Working Group and Board decisions.
- Internal control and risk management systems functioning effectively.

SELECTION CRITERIA

POSITION SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES	
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	DESCRIPTORS
Leadership and Management	I. Strategic Leadership • Ability to translate national policy and Taskforce - Board direction into practical strategies. • Long-term planning and disciplined execution. • Capacity to manage complex transitions and organizational change. II. Aviation and Operational Judgment • Strong understanding of aviation safety, operational discipline, and regulatory compliance. • Ability to balance commercial priorities with safety requirements. • Sound decision-making under operational pressure. III. Financial and Commercial Acumen • Strong budgeting, financial oversight, and cost-control capability. • Ability to evaluate investment proposals, fleet decisions, and route viability. • Understanding of airline revenue drivers and commercial partnerships. IV. Change Management and Organisational Development • Ability to lead organizational restructuring and workforce transition. • Skill in building a performance-driven culture. • Experience in managing resistance and maintaining staff engagement during change. V. People Leadership • Ability to build and lead high-performing executive teams. • Talent development and succession planning capability. • Strong communication and staff engagement skills. VI. Governance and Accountability • Strong understanding of corporate governance and Board reporting requirements • High personal integrity and ethical leadership • Ability to operate effectively within a Government-owned enterprise environment. VII. Stakeholder Management and Communication • Strong interpersonal and negotiation skills. • Ability to engage with Government, regulators, partners, and the public.

	Confidence in representing the airline nationally and regionally.
	VIII. Risk Awareness and Decision-making - Ability to identify operational, financial, and reputational risks early. - Evidence-based decision-making. - Balanced and prudent judgement.
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	DESCRIPTORS
Integrity / Ethics	- Possess appropriate values and belief in what is best for the common good. - Is widely trusted and is seen as a direct and courageous individual. - Personifies values of honesty, integrity, impartiality, transparency accountability. - Demonstrate self-awareness and commitment to personal development. - Serves the Government of the day irrespective of personal preferences. - Demonstrated knowledge, sensitivity and respect for the Samoan Culture and the laws and customs of Samoa.
Commitment & Personal Drive	- Takes responsibility and initiates timely action to resolve issues. - Is prepared to make tough corporate decisions to achieve desired outcomes. - Accepts accountability for mistakes made in the Authority and ensures corrective action is taken.
Intellect & Judgment	- Is analytical, proactive, innovative and able to conceptualize strategic issues faced by the Organisation and apply appropriate and cost-effective solutions. - Is aware of new and emerging issues such as climate change and disaster risks and able to design interventions to adapt to climate change and reduce disaster risks and ensure that the Organisation is ready to respond at all times to small scale incidents and national disasters. - Has the functional and technical knowledge to carry out the Chief Executive Officer's duties to a high level of accomplishment. - Makes sound decisions based on common sense, experience and good judgment without prejudice. - Anticipates implications and applies effective judgment to develop solutions.
Creativity and Innovation	- Consistently generates and employs original ideas, tackling both simple and complex problems. - Brings out the best in others, leads them to discover new ideas, solutions and new ways of doing the job and unafraid to use unorthodox methods.
EXPERIENCE & PAST WORK PERFORMANCE	DESCRIPTORS
Essential	- Significant senior executive experience in aviation or a closely related highly regulated industry. - Demonstrated experience leading organisational restructuring, or financial restructuring.

	• Strong understanding of airline economics, aviation safety frameworks, operational requirements and regulatory compliance. • Demonstrated experience in strategic planning, financial management, commercial decision-making and organisational performance. • Proven ability to operate effectively within complex stakeholder environments, including Government, regulators, Boards, employees, commercial partners and other external stakeholders. • Demonstrated experience leading multidisciplinary teams and managing organisational change. • Proven ability to make sound strategic and commercial decisions in complex and high-pressure environments.
Desirable	• Experience developing or operating in small, remote or island aviation markets. • Experience within a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE), Government-owned enterprise or public-sector commercial organisation. • Demonstrated experience with international airline or jet operations. • Experience in airline start-up, relaunch, turnaround, restructuring or major transformation programmes. • Experience in fleet acquisition, aircraft leasing, route development or international market expansion. • Experience developing and implementing commercial partnerships, codeshare, interline or other airline partnership arrangements. • Experience engaging with international aviation regulators, aircraft lessors, OEMs and other aviation industry stakeholders. • Demonstrated experience leading an organisation through significant operational, financial or strategic transition.
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	DESCRIPTORS
Essential	▪ Tertiary qualification in Business, Finance, Aviation Management, Economics, Commerce, or a related discipline. ▪ Relevant professional or technical qualifications applicable to aviation, management, finance, or a closely related regulated industry.
Desirable	▪ Postgraduate qualification in Business Administration, Aviation Management, Finance, Strategic Management, or a related discipline. ▪ Relevant aviation, airline operations, safety, regulatory, financial or executive management qualifications. ▪ Formal executive leadership, corporate governance, change management or strategic management training.