

5 April 2024

The Chair  
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
Department of the Senate  
PO BOX 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RE: Inquiry into the impact and mitigation of aircraft noise

Dear Chair

Since 2009, Australia's Federally leased airports have established Community Aviation Consultation Groups (CACGs) to provide an avenue for local community engagement on airport planning and operations, including aircraft noise. The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications provides guidelines for CACGs.

In line with those Guidelines, the Brisbane Airport Community Aviation Consultation Group (BACACG) serves as a consultative forum, bringing together government, the aviation industry, and the community, to discuss various topics related to Brisbane Airport. These include aircraft noise, airport developments, airport operations, and terminal access.

The BACACG operates independently and meets four times a year. Its members are nominated by elected government representatives, including those whose seats directly border the airport or are within a 30-kilometer radius.

As part of its engagement program, the BACACG aims to foster informed and responsive community engagement. It facilitates discussions on aircraft technologies, potential amenity impacts from increased aircraft operations, and airspace management processes. Additionally, the BACACG considers specific queries and submissions from individuals about the airport's operations, leveraging the technical expertise of representatives from the aviation industry.

The BACACG has been Chaired by me since 2021.

Prior to my appointment, it was Chaired by Major General Peter Arnison, AC, CVO (Ret'd) from its inception.

In addition to Community members, regular attendees at BACACG meetings include representatives of relevant State and Local government departments, Airservices Australia, Civil Aviation Safety Authority and airline representatives.

In the decade prior to the opening of Brisbane Airport's new parallel runway (NPR) in 2020, the BACACG was a vital forum to allow engagement between Airservices, BAC, airlines and the community to address issues related to aircraft noise and flight path design. The BACACG also played a key role in providing value feedback to BAC on its NPR Community Engagement Plan.

Throughout the airspace design process the BACACG was engaged by Airservices and BAC to allow community representatives to provide valuable feedback.

Since the NPR's opening in 2020, BACACG meetings have continued to address aircraft noise-related concerns raised by community representatives. The group remains committed to fostering dialogue around this issue, however with the establishment of the Brisbane Airport Community Airspace Advisory Board, noise related issues are generally referred to this forum.

As Chair of BACACG I was also a representative on Brisbane Airport Post Implementation Review (PIR) Advisory Forum (BAPAF), which complemented existing public engagement forums. Established by the then Government, the BAPAF's aim was to provide input from a community perspective to the Airservices PIR, including in relation to noise impacts of the NPR. This forum ran until December 2022.

Following the conclusion of BAPAF, in 2022, the Federal Government committed to establishing the Brisbane Airport Community Airspace Advisory Board (AAB). The AAB is an ongoing, independent community-based consultation body focused on managing consultation related to aircraft noise around Brisbane Airport. It oversees the implementation of changes identified in the Airservices Australia Post Implementation Review (PIR) and provides community input and feedback on proposed changes to flight paths and airspace associated with Brisbane Airport's Noise Action Plan.

Whilst the BACACG will continue to include noise on its agenda, and provide a forum for community members to discuss noise issues with the responsible bodies, and to advocate for change, BACACG members now also have the option to refer matters related to aircraft noise to the AAB for further investigation.

Through effective community engagement, the combined efforts of BACACG and the AAB aim to contribute to better managing the impact of airport operations on surrounding communities.

Over its life the BACACG has played a valuable role in increasing the dialogue between industry and the community about the complexities of aviation management, and the impacts, both negative and positive, on residents. Importantly too, it has built greater understanding of the many, and often competing, priorities of aviation management at Brisbane Airport.

Aircraft noise can be a significant nuisance for some residents. This reality must be balanced with the essential service aviation provides to the people of Brisbane. The BACACG is committed to continue its role in fostering greater engagement between industry and the community and in so doing, assisting in achieving better outcomes for all parties.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Chamier AM  
Chair  
BACACG