

**SUBMISSION from:**

**Peta Millard, resident in line with Moorabbin Airport runway**

**TO: Senate Standing Committee's Inquiry into the effectiveness of Airservices Australia's management of aircraft noise**

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There are many issues with maintaining an airport whose major business is pilot training within a residential environment. The most common complaints are centered on noise and accidents.

I live along side a flight path from Moorabbin Airport. I was well aware of this when I purchased the property and looking at the runways, the flight path is not directly over my home but 100m behind it. I have been contacting Phil McConnell, the CEO of Moorabbin Airport Corporation to voice my frustration at planes that deviate from the recommended flight path and fly directly over my home.

Phil has informed me that pilots are recommended to fly in a straight line from take off and maintain this heading until 500 feet during the day time and 1000 feet of a night time. This is a recommendation and not a policy. Why is this the case? Since when does a method of transport have recommendations and not enforceable rules? Road rules are bound by laws and consequences, are trainee pilots and their instructors above good manners at the very least? Because they are learning to fly does this mean that they are better than the little people that walk and drive to their destinations? What about the planes? Where are the mufflers to decrease the noise level? Authorities would like us to believe that plane noise is due to propeller rotation however, in a northerly wind planes land over our home where the propeller speed is reduced and it is very clear that the majority of the noise is generated from the engine. This does not compare to the roaring drone of the engine during a southerly wind which can be heard from the airport 1.2km away as planes begin their take off from the airport. The noise issue is due to airplane engines. What is being done to minimize the noise output of airplanes? To assist residents in their plight to monitor and comment on noise pollution there is a program called web track that is meant to show the flight paths of planes in a given area. This program has its limitations. When you view the program, it shows that planes are heading over Woodlands Golf Course, directly behind my home, however often this is not the case as many fly straight over the top of my roof line. Phil is no longer concerned with my requests to discipline pilots that do not maintain the correct heading. He has told me bluntly that my noise complaints need to be directed to Air Services Australia.

My noise complaint is a result of pilots not maintaining their take off heading and stems from circuit training. I understand that this is an integral part of pilot training as take off and landing are the most important skills to master, however I don't understand why they need to start at 9am on Sunday morning, or why they fly directly over sleeping residents homes or why the circuit aspects of training isn't done elsewhere in a more suitable location for safety and public health reasons.

I have reported my frustrations with Air Services Australia. A recent complaint lodged 20<sup>th</sup> December at 10:20am reads as follows.

*Circuit training on Sunday morning from 9am. A brilliant idea. Pilots are recommended to maintain take off line until over the golf course, yet there are planes flying directly over my roof line. Who makes recommendations into policies? Living near an airport means there is aircraft noise which can be tolerated, but flying over people's home on a Sunday morning when there is industrial land on three sides is just bad manners. I look forward to the day when one of these planes lands on my roof (hopefully no one is home at the time) or maybe a human life is what it will take for someone to think that having trainee pilots practice over residential areas wasn't such a great idea. Good to see that Air services Australia moves with the times and relocates pilot training venues to rural areas in response to the increasing use of commercial land for housing developments, especially in the Mordialloc area.*

*I would like a noise detector installed in the surrounding areas of Moorabbin Airport and recommendations to be changed to policy with definite consequences for non compliance. Have a peaceful day.*

Circuit training noise is annoying, but it can be tolerated when you know that all planes will maintain the take off heading and that licenses will be suspended for a period of time for non compliance.

The noise generated is not monitored. There is no noise monitoring equipment near Moorabbin Airport. There is some at Essendon Airport which doesn't make a lot of sense considering that it is hardly used these days and pilot training is not permitted any longer. Moorabbin is one of the busiest airports in Australia and it makes sense that governing agencies should be conscious about the impact of air traffic on the people that elect them to office. Or is it just an issue that is thrown around at election time and then put on the shelf until the next campaign?

The recent helicopter crash at the Moorabbin Airport and the one in past months that caused pieces of a helicopter to land in a school yard should be enough to force the powers that be to rethink their strategies for pilot training locations. Aircraft look for open spaces when attempting to complete an emergency landing, so a school yard with large green ovals would be considered a viable option, only problem is, often they are filled with school children.

I do look forward to the day that a plane crashes into my roof. I look forward to sitting on the front steps waiting for a variety of Government ministers and aviation officials to visit, give their apologies and ask what concerns I have as a resident, and for these issues to be used for election purposes. But will they really be responded to, or just be used as a persuasive tool in another human's plight to gain office?

Only when someone loses their life or a limb will pilot training be moved to a more appropriate location. Only when a serious mishap occurs will people take action. Someone somewhere will have to shoulder the blame for lack of urgency and action. Someone will have to take responsibility for the decision to maintain pilot training in highly populated areas. What am I saying? No one will take responsibility. The issue will end up in 'question time' and be argued about like teenagers, about who's at fault, what should have been done and what each party will do to ensure it doesn't happen again. These actions will all be in theory though. Question and answer time is an embarrassment. As a school teacher, my Year 10 boys are more effective at working out a solution that suits both parties and is also good for the wider community. I'm not holding my breath for any real change to occur until someone loses their life or even worse is paralysed and every waking day they are reminded about what life used to be like and how they are unable to complete basic tasks without assistance. Not to mention the family that will need to survive and help support a tragic change for the remainder of their lives. That is the word that will be used "tragic" along with "accident". It will be tragic and it will be an accident because these pilots are learning, but it will not be the accident of the government. It will be considered a side effect. Hundreds of thousands of flights leave Moorabbin Airport each year, if we have a couple of accidents here and there, so be it. It's interesting that the government spends millions of dollars each year on road safety campaigns only to ignore the dangers in our skies. A couple of million dollars could be used to enforce flight paths and to discipline misbehaving pilots and their trainers. People tend to pay attention when it hurts their hip pocket. The flight schools, the trainers and the trainee pilots should all be held accountable for non compliance of an airport recommendation. Oh, that's right it's a recommendation. Who has the back bone to make it policy and who has the back bone to devise consequences for non compliance?

On the television I have seen advertisements for a government initiative that encourages Melbourne residents to consider rural living. An air field just outside of Seymour is perfectly located over km's of farm land. Plenty of wide open fields for emergency landings, no local residents to potentially land on or to complain about accidents and noise from aircraft and room to expand operations.

Will this alter the functions of Moorabbin Airport? Absolutely. Would it mean that some people would lose their jobs, unless they were willing to travel to Seymour? Absolutely. Last time I checked the government isn't too concerned with the prospect of job loss. Companies that sell products in Australia are using overseas textile factories to produce the same products that we could manufacture here (Country Road, Bonds). It only makes sense that as a nation we tolerate increased company profits by not employing Australian's. So before the government argues that jobs will be lost and

families will do it tough due to the relocation of the training facilities to Seymour, stop yourselves short because there is nothing more frustrating than a hypocritical governing body that has rules for some and rules for others.

Essendon Airport has halted training programs. How much money was behind that decision and which high roller directly benefited from that decision? Moorabbin has similar facilities. A DFO outlet, other shopping centers, petrol stations, factories adjoining and new factories to be built on the recently closed Moorabbin Golf Club site. What's the difference between Essendon and Moorabbin? Oh, that's right; we live in a world where there are rules for some and rules for others and don't forget the concept of 'money talks'.

I have made a number of noise complaints to Air Services Australia over the past months and it is exceedingly disappointing when a person does not have a voice. Air Services Australia phoned me to talk about my complaint which centered on circuit training and also the deviation of flight paths after take off. The woman that I spoke to had no real time for my enquiries. She was terse in her responses and did not seem concerned about my requests for information. After hanging up from her I can only describe my mood as furious for two reasons, 1. She had been so rude and non-helpful and 2. Yet another plane flew directly over my roof line. In response, I completed yet another noise complaint entry on Air Services Australia's website which is included below.

*Just had a very irritating phone conversation with a staff member about circuit training times. I was told the hours permitted for circuit training during daylight savings and non daylight savings times. I was told that planes were not permitted to complete circuit training at night times. This is conflicting information as most people would consider any time after 6pm to be considered night time yet Aviation Services Australia feels that after 8pm, 9pm or 10pm is considered night time depending on the time of the year. I can contact the council for a constantly barking dog and the hoon laws are in place to help protect citizens from inappropriate use of roads and yet planes are free to do as they please because I was informed that "I don't own the airspace above my house". Last time I checked I don't own my neighbors house or the roads of Melbourne. Don't bother ringing because I was also told that there is nothing I can do to change what is happening on an hourly basis over my roof line. Hopefully this website service provides the PR front that it is supposed to and keeps someone employed because apart from that this email service is a waste of time.*

The uptight lady on the other end of the phone line said that I have to contact the General Aviation Safety Authority and leave a message in regards to having a recommendation turned into policy. Leave a message? It's good to see that the people that make all the decisions that affect so many are being so well protected from the little people.

I pay my taxes, abide by the law and do my best to make a difference in my immediate world through teaching the youth of Scoresby about manners, respect for others, doing the right thing because it's the right thing to do and not because you'll get something out of it, and to give everything, everyday, your best shot because you only get one chance at each day. Well, my positive outlook on life has taken a beating today. The very agencies that are put in place to deal with public questions about airspaces provide no opportunity to really voice an opinion nor do they provide an appropriate service to adequately deal with questions or concerns. Each day the little people are reminded that they really have no voice, no option other than to conform and no way of ensuring good sense and responsibility from a government agency. Seems that the rules for some and rules for others policy is firmly entrenched in our Australian way of life. It's good to know where I stand. No where near the top and no where near getting someone to consider another option because I am only one person and the government clearly isn't concerned about a little person's airspace above.

Another employee of Air services Australia rang me after I sent yet another noise complaint via email. He was very knowledgeable about aircraft procedures and could give me some more direction as to how to further my fight for circuit training restrictions. He encouraged me to contact Moorabbin Airport, CASA and the local Member of Parliament to voice my concerns. The only problem with this advice is that these parties are not willing to listen or respond to concerns in a productive manner. There seems to be a non-responsive love triangle occurring in the aviation industry. Moorabbin Airport CEO Phil McConnell told me to voice my noise concerns to Air services Australia. Air services Australia has told me to voice my concerns to CASA. CASA has told me that circuit traffic patterns are established at aerodromes so that pilots are able to enhance the safety of their passengers and third parties. Third parties? This is a reference to the residents of suburbs surrounding Moorabbin Airport. It's very empowering to know that pilots are number one, their trainee's number two and the little people that walk and drive are considered third parties. They also told me to contact Moorabbin Airport and Air services Australia. No one cares, no one takes responsibility, no one will take the initiative to make a concerted effort to listen and respond to residents concerns. The language and aviation jargon that each group uses to converse and respond serves only to frustrate those that take the time to voice their opinions. The aviation industry behaves as though they are above good manners and respectful behavior, not to mention safe and proactive practices that aim to maintain a high standard of public health and safety.

This letter will most likely receive a generic response about what the government is or isn't doing about airport safety and noise pollution. It will most likely be answered by an administration assistant that will attached a scanned signature to the bottom of the letter and post it off without a second thought.

The Government has been very lucky there has not been a major disaster at Moorabbin. A trainee pilot losing their life after they crashed into a house wasn't even considered a major disaster. It is even luckier that it has not had a major accident in the surrounding suburbs for which it will be held partially responsible.

The current training regime almost guarantees that at some point in the next 2, 5, 10 years that a major disaster, no, 'tragic accident' will happen. I have no doubt the Government, Moorabbin Airport Corporation, the local council and Aviation authorities have a very clear understanding of what residents concerns and recommendations are. What it comes down to is the final decision to have the training facilities moved, never to return. The elected representative that can produce this change will have my vote for 50 years. Not because they can give me what I want, the training facilities moved, but because this person demonstrates that tough decisions can be made in the face of pressure from those with money that can be far more persuasive than the little people that live around land that houses big business.

The Government has a responsibility to seriously consider the safety and public health implications of its citizens living in close proximity to an airport and to demonstrate its commitment to the wider community by having stringent rules for flight paths, consequences for non-compliance and most importantly having flight training relocated to less densely populated areas before we have a learner crash into a classroom full of children, a home or a busy factory.

Yours Faithfully,

Peta Millard