

**Bankstown Airport Limited
Camden Airport Limited**

Submission

Inquiry into Airservices Australia's Management of Aircraft Noise

Bankstown Airport Limited (BAL) and Camden Airport Limited (CAL) thank the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport for the opportunity to place a submission before the Committee.

Context

For the Committee's benefit Bankstown Airport and Camden Airport are classified as General Aviation Airport Procedures (GAAP) airports and facilitated over three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) and sixty five thousand (65,000) movements respectively in 2009.

Located within the geographical confines of the Sydney Basin the airports support a range of activity including flight training, charter operations, recreation & sports, freight and emergency services. They do not support any form of Regular Public Transport (RPT) and both airports have limitations on the size of aircraft that can operate on them.

Both airports were originally sited in largely non-residential and rural areas, however over the decades residential development has eliminated what was once an open space buffer between the community and airports. Both airports now have residential zones in close proximity to the airports including underneath the flight paths used for arrivals, departures and for training circuits.

Airport operators such as BAL and CAL are responsible for on-ground noise associated with aircraft operations except for noise generated during activities such as aircraft taxing, landing and takeoff which is addressed by the Air Navigation (Aircraft Noise) Regulations 1984.

In the absence of an organisation having/taking responsibility for coordinating the management of aircraft noise BAL and CAL has taken a pro-active and leading role with this issue by working with the regulators, airport stakeholders and the community.

Enquiry Issues response

A) *Whether Airservices Australia has conducted an effective, open and informed public consultation strategy with communities affected by noise;*

BAL and CAL are not aware that AirServices Australia has a community consultation strategy. Nor are we aware of any community consultation undertaken by Airservices Australia except for the passive information that is discoverable on their website. There appears to be no consultation strategy focused on communities impacted by General Aviation airports such as ours.

The majority of the complaints we receive in relation to aircraft noise relate to noise associated with aircraft in flight and it is apparent from the number of complaints we receive that most community members affected by aircraft noise are not aware of Airservices Australia's role in this matter.

B) Whether Airservices Australia engages with industry and business stakeholders in an open, informed and reasonable way;

We liaise effectively with ASA on a variety of matters. Usually this liaison relates to matters other than aircraft noise management - the exception being the development of aircraft noise modelling in relation to forecast airport activity during the review of the Airport Master Plans and Environment Strategies which occurs every five years as required under the 'Airports Act 1996'.

C) Whether Airservices Australia has adequate triggers for public consultation under legislation and whether procedures used by Airservices Australia are compliant with the requirements;

Neither Bankstown nor Camden Airport operations have required the Airservices Australia legislative triggers for public consultation. Both Airports have carried out its own public consultation with all matters relating to noise management.

D) Whether Airservices Australia is accountable, as a government-owned corporation, for conduct of its noise management strategy;

No comment.

E) Whether Airservices Australia has pursued and established equitable noise sharing arrangements in meeting its responsibilities to provide air traffic services and to protect the environment from the effects associated with aircraft for which it is responsible;

The capacity to implement noise sharing arrangement with the majority of GAAP airports is limited due to the nature of flight activity i.e. circuit flying, airspace constraints, lack of technology required to fly more exacting routes and the calibre of pilots who are in many cases private or are in a learning environment.

In regard to Bankstown Airport, the airspace and noise sharing arrangements for Sydney Airport restricts the capacity to introduce noise sharing arrangements at Bankstown Airport.

F) Whether Airservices Australia requires a binding Community Consultation Charter to assist it in consulting fully and openly with communities affected by aircraft noise;

BAL & CAL would support a charter as long as it is transparent and meaningful. The charter should expand the Community Consultation obligations to be greater than the legislated requirement.

G) Any other related matter.

- (i) The General Aviation fleet is ageing with many operating aircraft now well over 30 years old. Whilst noisy commercial aircraft engines have ICAO compliance environmental requirements and are progressively phased out there is no equivalent program for the General Aviation fleet. Noise standards must be established for small aircraft operating in Australia much like noise emissions standards for road vehicles and an appropriate regulator must stringently review noise emissions from all aircraft on a regular basis to ensure they meet these standards.

- (ii) Provision for the community to be better informed of noise profiles by replacement of twenty year Aircraft Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) contained in Airport Master Plans with an Airservices Australia continuously updated ANEF with a range of forecasts (high / medium / low) and series of time periods as opposed to the current static guide which looks 20 years ahead and is reviewed only once every five years.

Conclusion

Noise is a sensitive issue with the majority of the community living in the vicinity of airports. The Federal Government through its Aviation White Paper desires the community to be further engaged with many aspects of airport operations especially the management of aircraft noise. BAL and CAL are fully supportive of this position however to achieve the Governments objectives noise management at General Aviation airports require the support of the agencies that can influence noise outcomes.