

## **SACF Community Members Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport's Inquiry into the Effectiveness of Airservices Australia's Management of Aircraft Noise**

The purpose of this brief submission is to highlight some key learnings that we, the community members<sup>1</sup> of SACF have concluded in the over the 14 years that we have been involved with SACF and the issue of aircraft noise in Sydney.

### **Aviation Community Advocate**

Following several years of lobbying an Aviation Community Advocate (ACA) position was established and filled successfully between early 2007-2009 when, despite strong support from SACF, the position was suspended due to lack of funding by the current Government.

We are of the view that the continuation of this position in Sydney is vital for the following reasons:

- There is a need for an independent person to be able to explain information to the broader community. There are broad concerns about Airservices lack of independence. This is manifest in the broader community's mistrust of the Noise Enquiry Service (NES) and its inability to explain information as opposed to simply provide it. Particularly given the complex technical nature of the issue of aircraft operations there is a role for an independent community advocate to assist the general community in asking the right questions, accessing information, analysing and explaining it, as well as working with authorities to help bring about resolutions to their issues.
- There is a need for a skilled resource to support the members on SACF. The complex and evolving technical nature of airport operations, the volume of information and data puts the members of SACF at a distinct disadvantage relative to the full – time employees of Airservices and the industry. This is particularly the case for the volunteer community members. There is a need for a skilled and experienced individual to undertake research and analysis, to investigate issues and importantly to assist and advise SACF and the community in formulating proposals to ameliorate the impact of aircraft noise in Sydney.

The establishment of an Aircraft Noise Ombudsman is no substitute for an Aviation Community Advocate. As stated in SACF's response to the Government's Green Paper on Aviation, we would support the establishment of an Aircraft Noise Ombudsman only on the condition that it does not diminish the role of the Aviation Community Advocate.

### **Operations**

We are concerned about any proposals that may seek to bias the operations of the airport towards take-offs or landings in a particular direction or to concentrate aircraft operations and noise over any particular part of the community.

---

<sup>1</sup> As community members of SACF we include both those who are designated in the current or preceding Forums as "community members" and individuals from the community who are not paid as electoral office or council staff but may be representing a parliamentarian or other elected member who has a seat on SACF.

Our experience would indicate that the frequency of aircraft movements is a major determinant of the impact of aircraft noise and that every effort must be pursued to take the flights away from populated areas, putting them over water or national parks and then to share the remaining flights over as wide an area as possible to share the noise.

Recent advances in technology (RNAV GBAS etc.) that reduce the operating tolerances of the aircraft are being pushed by Airservices to increase capacity and for the benefit of their commercial customers. Unless implemented by Airservices with the clear requirement that these technologies and the resultant procedures must not result in concentration of aircraft tracks when over urban areas this risks being to the significant detriment of noise sharing and the community.

We welcome your consideration of our submission and would be pleased to elaborate on any areas it has raised.

The Community Members of SACF:

John Clarke

Kevin Hill

Robert Hayes

Maria Patrinos