

The Committee Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Inquiry into the effectiveness of Airservices Australia's management of aircraft noise

1 - BACKGROUND

From the outset, it is important to recognise that Airservices Australia has primary responsibility for determining air flight paths. Decisions to change flight paths can and do have serious consequences for people whose property and lives are affected by these changes. It is thus unacceptable that at the present time there appears to be no mechanism for the public to have their grievances taken seriously or indeed considered at all when these changes are made.

It is important to understand that while Airservices Australia is an Australian government owned corporation it receives the majority of its revenue from private interests such as airport owners, aircraft corporations and ancillary services. Only a small portion of funding is derived from the Government. This arrangement was revealed during the Senate Committee's estimate hearing of 20 October 2009 the following exchange between Senator Judith Adams of Western Australia and Mr Russell of Airservices Australia:

***Senator ADAMS** – Does Airservices Australia receive income from airlines and other corporate clients?*

***Mr Russell** – The overwhelming majority of the funds that are required to run this organisation are user fees, paid for by airlines and other users of Australian airspace, so the answer is: definitely, yes.*

***Senator ADAMS** – What percentage would come from those sources?*

***Mr Russell** – Our annual revenue at the moment is running at about **\$770 million**. I would have to get you a precise number, but I could tell you that from airlines – and other airspace users, private pilots and that sort of thing, but overwhelmingly airlines- the number would be well over 95 per cent.*

In may be argued that such an organisational arrangement predisposes Airservices Australia to conflicts of interest and has the potential to create confusion as to the priorities and responsibilities of Airservices Australia to the public.

While we all understand that air travel and transport is an important feature of contemporary life, it is clear that a consistent and fair approach to these decisions is required. Decision making needs to be open and publicly accountable. The public have a right and an expectation to be informed of proposed and actual changes to flight paths. Despite the recent politicisation of this issue, current Government ministers when in Opposition called for community consultation on aircraft flight paths. Evidence for this support may be observed from the quotes of current Senior Government Ministers when they were in opposition in *Section 3.1* of this submission.

This submission will address the failure of Airservices Australia to adequately engage in community consultation prior to making changes to the aircraft flight plan for Perth Airport, Western Australia. The submission will also reflect on the subsequent impact that these changes have had on individuals living in affected areas. Recommendations are made as to how the consultation process engaged in by Airservices Australia can be immediately improved to ensure it is effective, open and informed.

Airservices Australia is the government body responsible for the management of Australian airspace. Airservices Australia manages safety, environmental and noise concerns surrounding aircraft traffic. In various communications Airservices Australia have maintained that community consultation as to flight paths is not a primary responsibility of theirs, despite that it is the only body equipped with the expertise and resources to engage in such a consultation process.

It has been deeply concerning that Airservices Australia has sought to shift responsibility for consultation to individual PANMCC members when contacted by the community about flight path changes.

1.1 Present Consultative Arrangements

I had been a member of the *Perth Airport Noise Management Consultative Committee* (PANMCC) since 2003. The PANMCC consists of representatives from Perth Airport, Airservices Australia, Local Governments and other interested bodies. Either I or one of my staff regularly attended meetings of the PANMCC.

Due to unaddressed concerns relating to Airservices Australia's consultation procedures I resigned from PANMCC in August 2009. As most of the members of PANMCC are not members of the aviation industry, there is a great reliance on the information provided to them by Airservices Australia. It is not possible for PANMCC to operate effectively when they are provided with insufficient or incomprehensible information.

Despite this involvement with the PANMCC, the issue of dramatically increased air traffic and subsequent aircraft noise in the Eastern Hills region of my electorate was brought to my attention by constituents located in these affected areas and not from Airservices Australia or via information provided to the Committee.

Since March 2009 my office has been handling frequent constituent complaints from affected residents raising questions as to why changes were made to the flight paths without any community consultation process having first been engaged in. It was only in April 2009, after considerable public agitation, that Airservices Australia explicitly informed PANMCC members of the significant changes that had been made to the Perth Airport flight paths.

1.2 Impact of the flight path changes for Perth Airport

The impact of changes to the aircraft flight plans on individuals and families should not be underestimated. In a survey sent out to affected households in the electorate of Pearce in 2009, 85 per cent of respondents reported an increase in air traffic within their local area. It is most alarming that almost 96 per cent of respondents reported that they were not aware of any proposals to change the flight paths within their local area prior to November 2008 when the changes were made. Please see **Annexure A** for full survey results.

The most concerning aspect for my constituents exposed to increased air traffic is the aircraft noise. The impact of this noise will be discussed further in this submission. A secondary consideration is the pollution caused by high density flights.

Many constituents made the conscious decision to invest and reside the Perth Hills locality for the tranquillity that it offers. An effective consultation process in such circumstances is all the more important because of the dramatic effect that aircraft noise has had on their way of life.

This issue of aircraft noise has generated an unprecedented level of community action in Western Australia culminating in the creation of Fairskies (see www.fairskies.com.au).

1.3 Reason for changes to the flight path

The changes to the Perth Airport flight paths were brought about by the *Western Australian Route Review Project* (WARRP) following a Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) audit finding that changes were required “to maintain safety, reduce complexity and cope with the rapid and predicted continued increase in air traffic.”

The CASA Report was not made available to PANMCC members, despite a request for it.

Following a protracted effort by me and parliamentary colleagues, Steve Irons MP, Member for Swan and Don Randall MP, Member for Canning, to receive an explanation for the flight path changes, Airservices Australia finally agreed to meet on 3 July 2009. It was again stressed that the changes were in response to safety issues outlined in the CASA Report, but our request to see this document was refused.

I have since obtained access to the *CASA Audit Report* for audit number 03-01 completed 27 June 2003 by paying for the document under a Freedom of Information Request. On receipt

of this document however large parts had been blanked out. The remaining text gives no indication of serious safety issues relating to Western Australian airspace.

Furthermore it would appear that there is some confusion between CASA and Airservices Australia as to which audit formed the basis for WARRP. Airservices Australia make numerous references to an audit conducted in 2002 throughout correspondence and on their website, whereas CASA has provided a 2003 audit report in response to my request for the **relevant** report.

Given that the changes have a dramatic impact on the lives of those living in affected areas, it is important and indeed necessary for the public to have access to the basis for the changes. Most reasonable people will understand the paramountcy of safety issues when determining flight paths.

The apparent clandestine nature of these processes, the uncertainty surrounding changes to the flight paths and the inconsistency of the rationale for not providing the CASA Report highlights some of the current flaws in the consultation process and the reason for such disquiet from within the community.

It is the lack of effective, open and informed consultation between Airservices Australia and the community that is most at issue. Airservices Australia must immediately adopt enforceable procedures to ensure that the community is engaged with prior to further changes to flight paths in Australia. All relevant documents in regard to the need for changes must be made available to the public.

2 - AIRSERVICES AUSTRALIA CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR PERTH AIRPORT

2.1 Consultation with the PANMCC

PANMCC was advised of a review of flight paths from 2006-2008 but had not been advised of any changes that had actually been implemented. In an examination of the original minutes held on my files of PANMCC meetings there appears to be nothing to suggest that any changes would have a major impact on any one group or particular area. **Based on the information given, many of the members felt that it was reasonable to conclude that the changes would not be cause for concern.**

The consistent impression given by Airservices Australia at PANMCC meetings was that any changes to the flight paths would only occur at considerable distances from the airport. **Such representations were clearly incorrect.**

The information given to PANMCC members by Airservices Australia, particularly with regard to the WARRP was of an inadequate standard. The majority of members on the PANMCC are not aviation experts but community representatives and yet much of the information was inaccessible to committee members, let alone the general community.

Airservices Australia provided the Committee with computer generated charts showing flight density of traffic over the Perth metropolitan area. These maps were of negligible use as there are no location markers on the maps making it impossible to assess the impact of changes on specific suburbs. Furthermore there was no prior indication of the need to pursue further detail as the Committee was assured that the changes affecting the metropolitan area would not be significant.

During this Senate Committee's estimates hearing on 20 October 2009, the CEO of Airservices Australia, Mr Greg Russell himself noted:

“These airspace concepts can be very technical and difficult to understand and I think the lesson from our viewpoint is that we need to ensure that the information is understood, rather than just assuming that no feedback on it is in fact equal to understanding.”

Other PANMCC members have made the point that Airservices Australia made no specific reference to significant changes to flight paths at committee meetings prior to the actual change occurring in November 2008. This was evidenced by an email dated 30 July 2009 from Mr John Macpherson of the Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation (**Annexure B**).

Airservices Australia failed to adequately consult with the PANMCC regarding changes to the flight path. Such failure arose from incomplete or ineffective information. An enforceable and accountable consultation process must be established with community representatives, and all information must be readily understandable by the general community.

2.2 Consultation with the community

Airservices Australia failed to directly engage in consultation at any level with the community. Such a failure to consult with and inform the community on future changes is evidenced by the results of a survey I conducted throughout the affected areas of my electorate. **94% of respondents to this survey were not aware of proposals to change the flight paths prior to November 2008 (Annexure A).**

Information for the community was only published online following repeated requests by members of the PANMCC in August 2009; nearly 9 months after the changes to flight paths came into effect.

In a letter dated 24 July 2009 (**Annexure C**), I voiced my concerns over the consultation process to Airservices Australia and called for public meetings so that affected individuals can directly seek information from Airservices Australia. This is especially important in the context that PANMCC members were not given adequate information to respond to many community concerns.

Following repeated requests for public meetings in PANMCC meetings, by correspondence to Airservices Australia, and in Parliamentary speeches it is only now that Airservices Australia has agreed to such a meeting to be conducted in Mundaring in the Perth Hills. It is unfortunate that despite my requests for this public meeting to be held during a non-sitting week of Parliament this request has not been granted and the meeting will take place on 3 February 2010 without my attendance.

There has been no attempt made by Airservices Australia to have an effective, open and informed public consultation process. Airservices Australia did not directly engage with the community through any medium and instead considered their inadequate consultation with the PANMCC to suffice.

3 - AIRSERVICES AUSTRALIA RESPONSIBILITIES

The organisational structure of Airservices Australia raises a number of potential issues which need to be clarified if future changes to community consultation process are to be fully effective.

3.1 Support for clarification on Airservices Australia's responsibilities

Despite the subject of this Senate Inquiry having been politicised in recent times, it is clear that there is strong bi-partisan support for an improved community consultation process to be undertaken by Airservices Australia when making decisions on flight paths.

The current Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the member for Grayndler was very vocal on this point while in Opposition.

In 2001, the Member for Grayndler (now the portfolio Minister) discussed the impact of aircraft noise on affected communities in the context of the *Aircraft Noise Levy Collection Amendment Bill 2001* noting that:

“The practical impact of aircraft noise on the people in the communities that I represent is much greater than suggested by theoreticians, the forecasters who sit comfortably in offices in Canberra.

In 1999 the Member for Grayndler presented a Bill to establish an Aviation Noise Watchdog and advocated for an Ombudsman noting that:

“Any changes to aircraft routes over populated areas will have to be examined by the Aviation Noise Ombudsman. The Aviation Noise Ombudsman will ensure that community complaints regarding excessive aircraft noise... are heard without bias and judged fairly on the merits of the case.”

Similarly in 1998, the Member for Melbourne, now Minister for Finance and Deregulation stated during debate on the *Adelaide Airport Curfew Bill 1998*:

“These issues are difficult for governments because governments have to ensure that airports provide maximum economic development for the hinterlands that they serve and, at the same time, minimum disruption, noise intrusion and environmental damage to the local communities in which they are situated. It is always a case of reaching a balance between those two, often conflicting objectives...”

We in the opposition say that everybody in Australia who lives in the immediate vicinity of a major airport should be entitled to insulation based on a small ticket tax on the basis that it is offered in Sydney. That should be done on the same basis of equality right across the country...

There is no reason why you should not have equality of treatment across the country.”

In light of these and other previous statements by the Minister, there is a clearly a united will to ensure that there is proper recognition of the impact of aircraft noise, and a clear elucidation of Airservices Australia’s responsibilities which can then be overseen by an independent review mechanism.

3.2 Potential for Conflict of Interest

Airservices Australia is a government-owned corporation; however the majority of their revenue is sourced from private interests.

With Airservices Australia relying so heavily on the airline industry to maintain its revenue, it is clear that there is the potential for a conflict of interest. The organisational structure of Airservices Australia means that without a clear statement of responsibility there will inevitably be questions asked as to whose best interests Airservices Australia is representing.

A clear statement of Airservices Australia’s responsibilities is immediately required to eliminate the potential conflict of interest between the community and airline industry

3.3 Consultation requirements for other infrastructure changes

There is a clear precedent within other Government Departments and Agencies such as the Department of Defence, and State and Federal bodies dealing with infrastructure projects in

main roads and property development to widely consult with affected communities during forward planning. This is particularly relevant where property rights and values have the potential to be affected and where there is a likely impact on quality of life for residents. It is unacceptable that this same expectation of community consultation and due regard to public interest does not apply to Airservices Australia.

4 - IMPACT OF FLIGHT PATH CHANGES

Public consultation is imperative where changes to flight paths are involved because of the dramatic impact aircraft noise and pollution can have on people's lives. A small selection of correspondence received from constituents is indicative of the impact the new flight paths are having on affected communities:

"Like many other residents of Glen Forrest and adjacent areas, I moved into the area for the peace and tranquillity that it offered. It was a wonderful relief to move from the noisy inner suburbs 6 years ago to this serene location... It used to be that I could lie in bed at night and listen to the sound of frogs, crickets and owls outside – now I have to listen to aircraft flying overhead!" JC, Glen Forrest

"When you choose to live in the hills area you are not just buying a property you are buying a lifestyle and in our case and that of our neighbours that lifestyle has been destroyed in one foul swoop and to add insult to injury this has been done without any due consultation and consideration." JS, Glen Forrest

"Our sleep has been seriously disrupted by this intrusion into our lives (aircraft at 1:40, 2:00 and 2:20 on 27/6/09 as an example of this). Most flights are DIRECTLY over our property, with a few slightly to the south, but the noise pollution is still more than significant. Another concern for us is the extremely low level of the flights (some as low as 1200m). As we collect rainwater as our only source of drinking water, what pollution are we now consuming?" KR, Chidlow

"In 1997-98 my partner and I purchased 17.5 acres of land, bordered by the Beelup National Park and A class Reserve. The purpose of our purchase was to seek a quieter, more relaxed lifestyle than the one we enjoyed in the City. Our plan was to slowly develop the property into a luxury retreat. In the following ten years, we spent \$1.5 million...

I have invested my life's earnings into this property. I now have a husband with a brain tumour, who can't work and the property has become my sole income. If this had been a scheduled heavy aircraft route we would never have bought the property in the first place...

My potion would be to sell the place, but who would want to buy a luxury property or luxury retreat with an aircraft route directly overhead, especially as the current problem can only increase dramatically." YR, Mundaring

Some constituents have reported taking time off work to recover from the sleep deprivation caused by aircraft noise during the early morning. The dramatic increase in noise has caused a great deal of stress for many people, especially as the decision to move to these areas was taken by many seeking a peaceful location.

The noise assessment process carried out by Airservices Australia was internal, and not readily accessible by the public. Over 400 respondents to my survey had registered a complaint with the Noise Enquiry Service. If effective consultation was engaged in prior to the flight path changes a more appropriate assessment could have been reached.

5 - RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Recognise that the current consultation process undertaken by Airservices Australia is inadequate.

5.2 Recognise that immediate action is needed to ensure that Airservices Australia is bound by and accountable to a thorough community consultation process.

5.3 Create a clear statement of responsibilities for Airservices Australia and other relevant bodies such as Noise Management Committees

5.4 Create guidelines for effective, open and informed consultation with PANMCC and similar bodies across Australia with a view to national consistency.

- All information from Airservices Australia to Committee members must be readily accessible and understandable to those without aviation knowledge
- In the event of future flight path reviews, safety reviews or flight path changes, all Committee members must be made expressly aware of the full potential impact of changes, and members must acknowledge their understanding
- Airservices Australia must actively seek feedback from Committee members on the best way to engage with affected or potentially affected communities

5.5 Create consistent guidelines for effective, open and informed consultation with the community across the country

- Airservices Australia to directly engage in consultation with the communities affected or potentially affected by changes to flight paths
- Community consultation to be advertised through main newspapers and local newspapers, and other means as recommended by Noise Management Committees
- Airservices Australia to allow a reasonable consultation period, and to actively seek feedback regarding the impact of aircraft noise from the community

5.6 Publish to the fullest extent possible all information relating to investigations of aircraft flight paths

- Airservices Australia to clearly explain to the Noise Management Committees and community why changes to flight paths are necessary
- Airservices Australia to discuss with Noise Management Committees to the fullest extent possible all available options for flight path changes
- Airservices Australia undergo continuous investigation into the viability of a more equitable distribution of aircraft traffic
- Airservices Australia to initiate a public discussion on aircraft noise abatement options

5.7 Introduction of an independent reviewer of the consultation procedures

- Establish a fully independent Ombudsman or other independent body (in no way affiliated with Airservices Australia or any member of the Australian Parliament) to oversee the consultation process and to hear public complaints
- Independent reviewer to oversee a review process of compensation claims made by affected individuals or businesses
- Ongoing independent investigation of Airservices Australia consultation behaviour
- Introduction of enforcement procedures to compel compliance with consultation process
- Opportunity for community consultation in discussion of improvements of aircraft noise and flight path consultation

6 - CONCLUSION

As air traffic will continue to grow and the impact on communities is likely to intensify, it is vital that immediate changes are made to ensure that there is a consistent national procedure for adequate consultation between Airservices Australia and the Australian community. For most people in the community, it is reasonable to expect that they would occasionally experience aircraft noise, we are a vast nation and aircraft travel and transport is an increasingly integral component of our transport options. Yet it is simply unacceptable that for many people the impact of aircraft noise is a constant, and their way of life is damaged by the ever present noise and pollution of overhead planes.

It is vital that the community is engaged to the fullest degree possible in the decision making process on flight paths, as ultimately it is the community who is most affected. By adopting the above recommendations, the intolerable experiences of residents of Perth's Eastern Hills will not be repeated elsewhere in the future.

Through this Senate Committee I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the tireless work and invaluable advice of the community members who have established Fairskies.

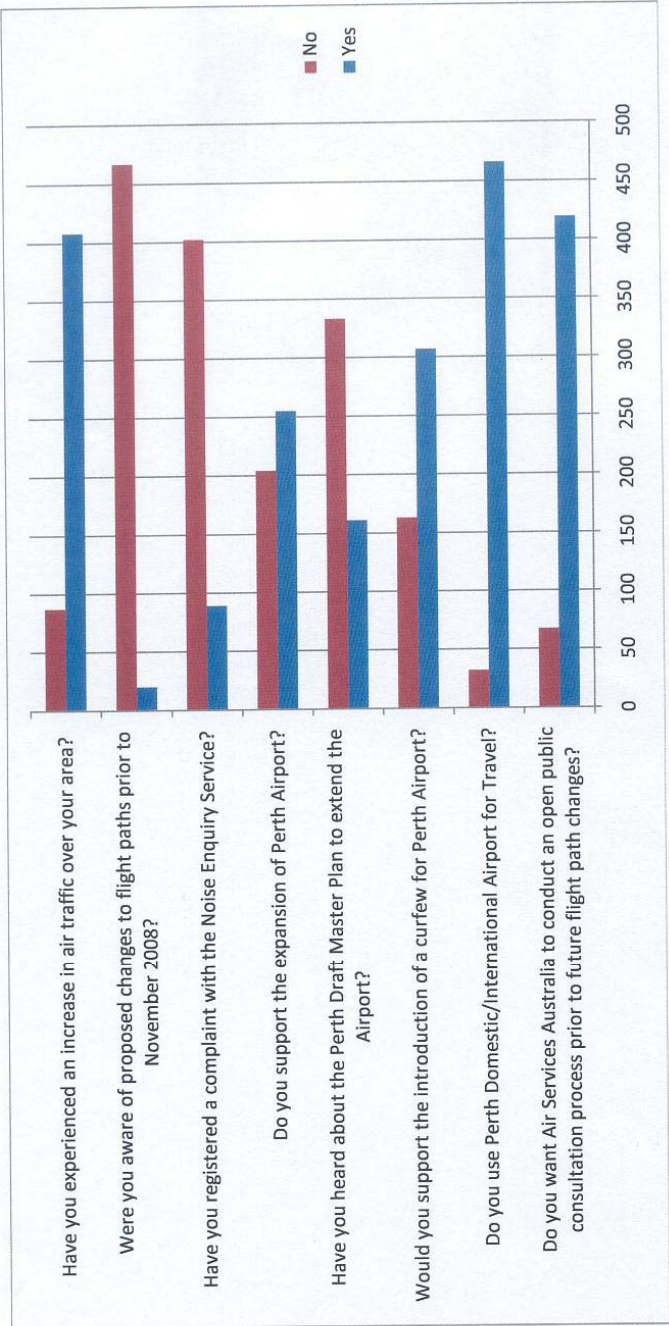
The adoption of the aforementioned recommendations will result in a consultative process that engages Airservices Australia, the airline industry and the community in the just management of Australia's airspace.

There is an urgent need for an independent process to ensure that a corporatised government entity with unfettered power is able to be held publicly accountable for changes to flight paths and the impact that may have on communities Australia wide.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judi Moylan', written in a cursive style.

The Hon Judi Moylan MP
Member for Pearce
27 January 2010

PEARCE ELECTORATE AIRPORT NOISE SURVEY 2009



Survey distributed by direct mail to approximately 3500 residents in most-affected suburbs
 Survey sent by mail on 17 August 2009
 495 responses as of 25 January 2010

Authorised by the Hon Judi Moylan MP, 490 Great Eastern Highway, GREENMOUNT WA 6056

ANNEXURE - B

Natoli, Conrad (J. Moylan, MP)

From: Macpherson, John [John.Macpherson@dec.wa.gov.au]
Sent: Thursday, 7 May 2009 2:19 PM
To: 'Peter Cock'; Andrew Sellick; Barbara Dundas; Barry McKenna; Natoli, Conrad (J. Moylan, MP); David Tomlinson; Lance Dale; Marcel Coutinho; Michael Kennedy; Nick Heidl; Nicolette Matchitt; Phil Lippie; Phil Marks; Ross Wells; Sharon Davies; Jackson, Sharryn (MP); Shayne Silcox; Irons, Steve (MP); Steven Tan; Torb Petersen; Travis Burrows
Cc: Popoff-Asotoff, Peter
Subject: RE: Western Australian Route Review Project

Peter/Torb,

My apologies for sending this directly to the full Committee.

I have gone back over my notes from the various PANMCC meetings regarding the WARRP, and would agree with Torb's summary of dates etc.

However, I feel it is fruitful to look at the depth and quality of information that was provided, in order to better understand how the current situation came about, where we have a number of concerned people from several residential areas all experiencing a sudden increase or concentration in aircraft noise over their suburb.

Here are my notes from the PANMCC meetings (or Mike Cake's from 4 October 2006) re the various discussions that occurred:

28 July 2006 – Ken Hodge attended PANMSC and advised Airservices Australia were looking at the route structures and this would affect SIDS and STARS. He would be coming to the next meeting, and information would be on the ASA website. Consultation would take place in the second half of 2006, then design/training/implementation in 2007. Committee commented we needed information to be available and submission dates. Ken Hodge noted that the changes would be further out than current changes.

Comment – This was very preliminary and gave the impression that the changes would not affect the nearest suburbs.

4 October 2006 – Mike Cake from DEC attended as I was on leave. His notes were as follows:
Airservices – a review of airspace in WA – Western Australia Route Review Project (WARRP). Consultation is provided by website – updates emailed to stakeholders. Largely looking outside 100nm for significant changes, with minimum changes close to the airport. Stage 1 implementation – June 2007; Stage 2 remote destinations in WA. Instigated by CASA as a required Corrective Action for safety reasons. Noise concerns raised as a result of introduction of new airspace boundaries. South of Banjup in June 2005 have been addressed – Banjup/FRIARS. Major restriction is military airspace to the north of Perth.

No significant change to RWY 21 arrivals or departures within 11nm. RWY 03 arrivals – changes from over Banjup and significant change to northern approach. Looking to minimise crossovers of arrivals and departures. Overheads will be placed on the website – need to download. Two way route structure ('racetrack' approach).

Stage 2 will involve closer investigations of impacts around regional airports, although to a certain extent these will not be dramatically altered because arrival/departure orientations have been informed by existing runway alignments and weather conditions. South Perth commented that time of aircraft also needed to be considered (e.g. international flights). Other trends are more accurate tracking of routes using GPS for way points; 'free flight' for internationals above certain altitude (28,500). Qantas are allowed visual approach along river when suitable weather allows – to reduce 25nm – time-fuel saving (environmental benefits). (Some cultural change at Qantas – used to be where they could save a nm they would). Domestic would tend to use this visual approach (props). Departures use the South Perth route. Policy is for different arrival or departure routes to share the load.

Assessment of proposed change – assessment normally stays as an internal document. Would consider releasing environmental reports for public comment at request of PANMSC. Only if significant would it go to Minister for Environment. DEC should perhaps also request this information. Call for environmental reviews to be made publicly available – emissions plus noise – unclear whether that would be to PANMSC only or to broader public, e.g. on website. Safety clearly has priority. Will compare impacts to existing routes. Torb to prepare letter.

Comment - Torb wrote to Airservices Australia on 15 November 2006 requesting the Environmental Assessment reports for the proposed flight tracks. I vaguely recall seeing a brief report concluding there was no significant impact

according to Airservices screening procedure, but do not seem to have a copy. I note that Peter has requested this report below, and would like to see a copy for review.

Again the impression was given that the changes would occur well away from the airport.

21 February 2007 – the status of the WARRP was raised in Other Business. Committee was advised that the project had been delayed from June to November due to air traffic issues and problems of access through Defence areas. Environmental assessment was to start in April. The routes on the website were not likely to change, and most of the changes would be further out (50-60km) from the airport.

Comment – This was a brief update regarding the delay, again reinforcing the impression that the changes would occur well away from the airport.

Emails from ASA re website updates – As far as the emails from Airservices Aust between 11 August 2006 and 8 January 2007 are concerned, I note that these referred to changes being notified on the ASA website. I went to the website a few times but was unable to make any sense of the 'spaghetti' of flight paths. These maps contained a lot of jargon and did not show the suburbs beneath, so were really only accessible by aviation experts.

In summary, we are left with a number of issues –

1. The consistent impression given by ASA that the changes would only occur at distances well away from the airport was ultimately misleading, and led the Committee to a view that the changes were not likely to significantly impact any particular group;
2. The quality of information provided by ASA was clearly inadequate to enable non-aviation-experts to identify or evaluate the likely impacts;
3. The extent of consultation by ASA was really only to the PANMCC and was therefore too narrow to encompass the more distant suburbs that have experienced the most noticeable impact;
4. The noise assessment process that ASA carried out was largely internal, and while it is possible that the Committee saw a report, the noise assessment was not made publicly available in a way that the community could readily see or understand;
5. The Committee raised concerns about the ASA process (I recall City of Melville and myself raising it), with the result that PANMCC included an item on our Strategy Implementation Table (Action 6), which essentially involved a much greater involvement with the ASA Environment and Climate Change people on these airspace issues, however that has not eventuated.

Way forward

I would propose that the full Committee hold an extraordinary meeting with ASA when they come over on 28 May, with a view to discussion on the four points that Peter raised below and the five points above, plus other issues that members may wish to raise on this topic.

Regards,

John Macpherson
Principal Environmental Noise Officer
Department of Environment and Conservation

6467 5280

From: Peter Cock [mailto:Peter.Cock@wac.com.au]

Sent: Wednesday, 6 May 2009 3:13 PM

To: Andrew Sellick; Barbara Dundas; Barry McKenna; Conrad Natoli; David Tomlinson; Macpherson, John; Lance Dale; Marcel Coutinho; Michael Kennedy; Nick Heidl; Nicolette Matchitt; Peter Cock; Phil Lippie; Phil Marks; Ross Wells; Sharon Davies; Sharryn Jackson; Shayne Silcox; Steve Irons; Steven Tan; Torb Petersen; Travis Burrows

Subject: FW: Western Australian Route Review Project

Dear Committee Members

At our recent meeting there seemed to be some confusion over the consultation that had taken place over the WA Route Review Process (WARRP) undertaken by Airservices, this is in part due to a number of members being new to the committee. I think it is worth recounting what has actually taken place. Torb Petersen our resident guru on all things noise management (+ more) has made the following account:

- Airservices formally notified the NMCC about the WARRP on 26 July 2006 as per the attachment

Hon Judi Moylan MP
Member for Pearce



24 July, 2009

Dr Peter Cock
Chair
Aircraft Noise Management Consultative Committee
Perth Airport
P O Box 6
CLOVERDALE WA 6985

Dear Dr Cock

Further to our discussions at the meeting held on the 22nd July and your request to those at the meeting to submit details of a suggested public consultation process I make the following points.

1. As I made clear in the meeting I consider a robust, open and wide public consultation process to be an essential part of any changes to flight paths.
2. This process should involve all affected areas and public meeting arrangements should be advertised prominently in local newspapers to alert people of meeting arrangements.
3. Given that there will be a number of technical questions the meetings should be attended by qualified people including Air Services Australia, Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Perth Airport.
4. Clear charts with location markers should be available with both incoming and outgoing flight paths over the affected areas clearly visible and other relevant information available on request in a timely manner prior to meeting times.

The comments by Air Services Australia that they are only prepared to hold briefing sessions with the Committee, elected representatives and shire officials is simply not acceptable.

From the tenor of the meeting it was clear that most other members of the Committee including Local Government, Community groups and elected Members of Parliament believed that an open public meeting was essential.

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Changes to flight paths clearly have a major impact on amenity and on the value of property and the public is entitled to full accountability and openness in the administration of flight path changes.

It is simply unrealistic to expect that any one Member of the Committee has the ability to conduct full public consultation on matters that are highly technical and complex in nature.

None of the committee members representing community groups has any authority to make changes to airflight paths or the expert knowledge on the safety and other issues that may necessitate change.

Further in the context of the current public furore, none of us had been advised of the actual changes that had taken place and were not in possession of appropriate material to conduct any meaningful public meetings, nor should that role fall to these individuals.

For me and many other members of the Committee the first we knew of any changes was when a rash of public complaints about aircraft noise began.

I am extremely disappointed at the outcome of the ANMCC Meeting on 22nd July and the continual refusal of the relevant agencies to accept responsibility for open and accountable public consultation.

Having reviewed the Terms of Reference of the Committee I wish to flag my intention to formally resign following the next meeting unless assurances can be given that an open and accountable public information process is established involving all relevant agencies including Air Services Australia, CASA and Perth Airport and that the Committee members are given accurate and full information before the fact, in a format that is clearly understandable. This information needs to be provided in a timely manner. It is unacceptable for Committee members to receive large and complex documents days before a scheduled meeting.

As a Member of Parliament I will continue to seek briefings from Air Services Australia as necessary so that I can continue to answer questions from the constituency of Pearce in relation to flight paths.

In the interests of open and accountable governance, I would hope that these important issues can be resolved.

Yours sincerely



JUDI MOYLAN